SCIENCE FICTION MONTHLY

THIS ISSUE

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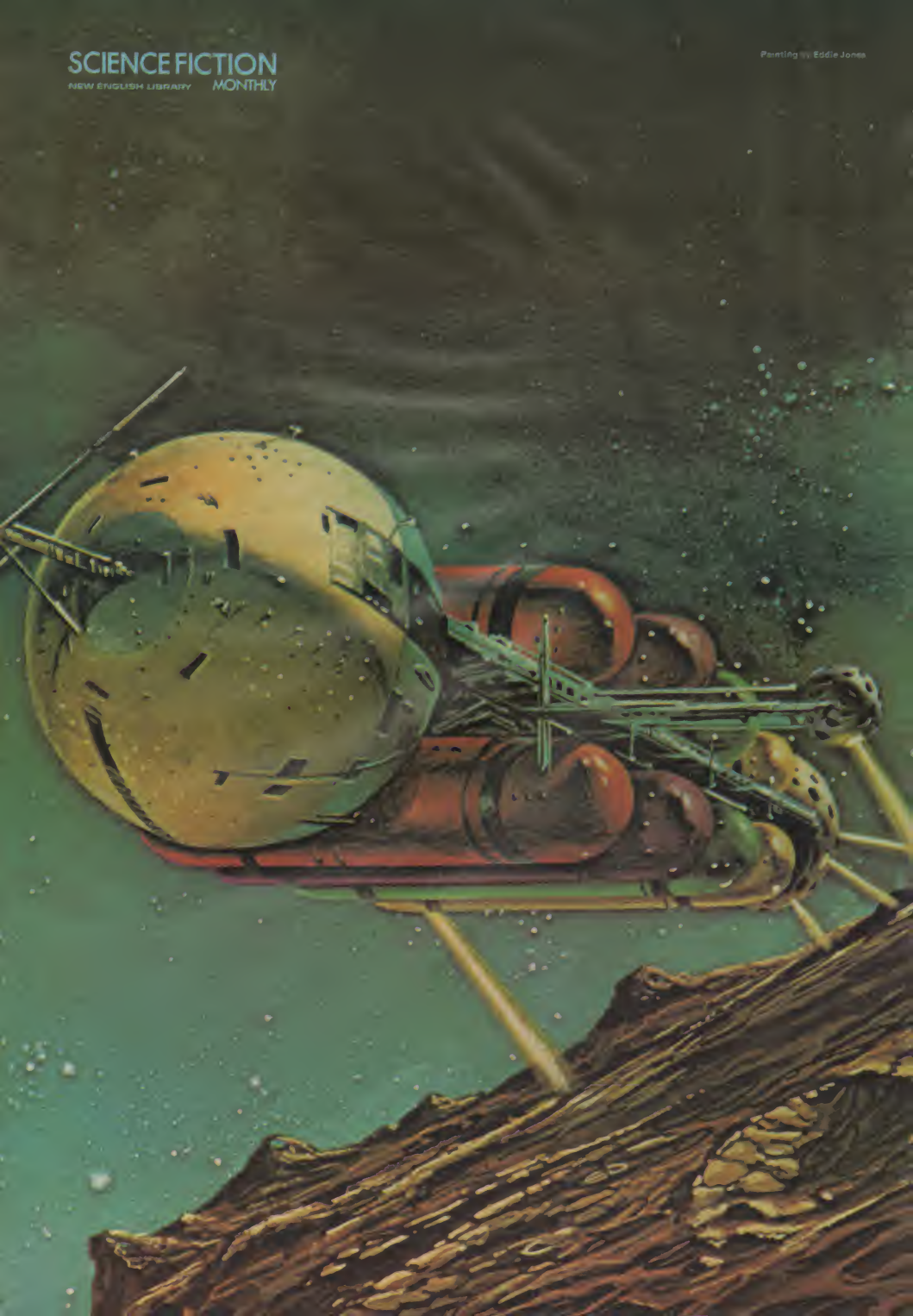
Anne McCaffrey
Brian Stableford
E J Stark

Art by
Eddie Jones
Bruce Pennington
Jim Burns

SCIENCE FICTION
NEW ENGLISH LIBRARY MONTHLY

Painting by Eddie Jones



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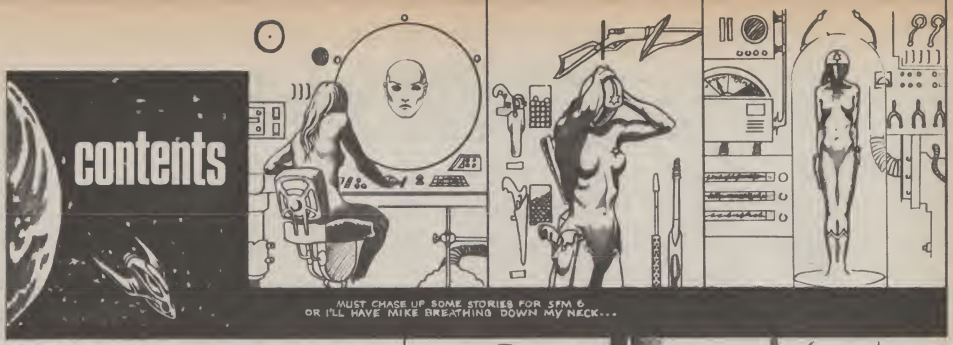

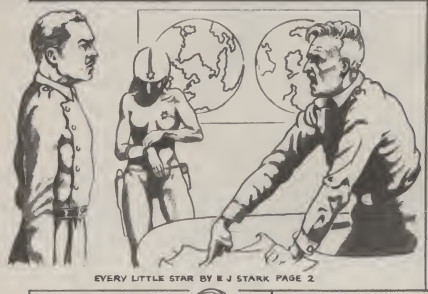
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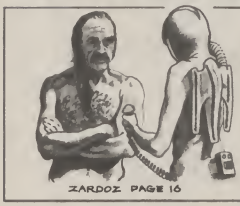
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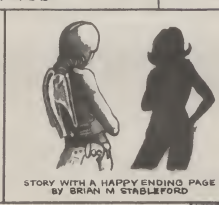
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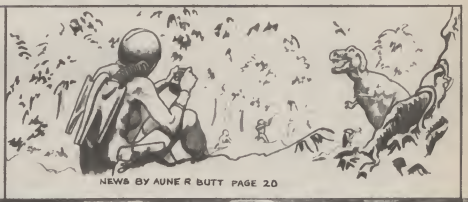
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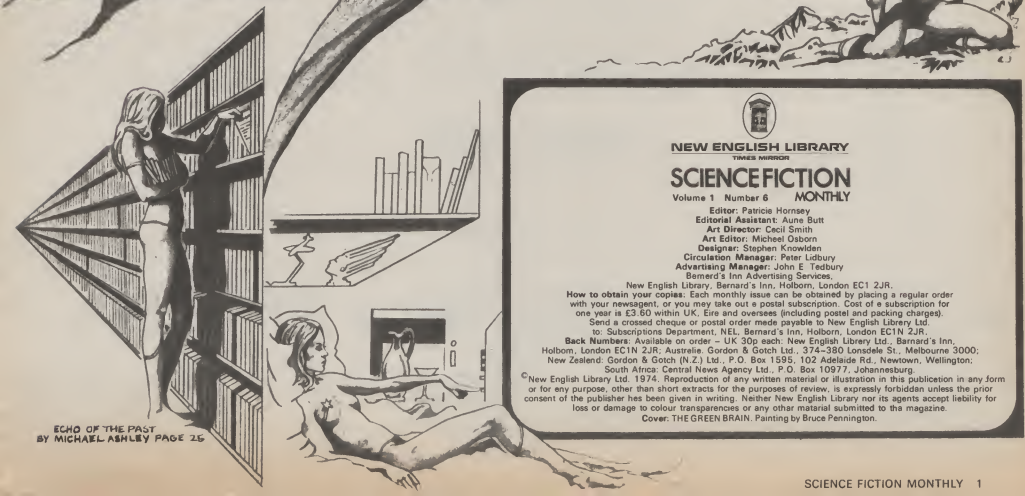
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Cover: THE GREEN BRAIN. Painting by Bruce Pennington.

BY E J STARK
EVERY LITTLE STAR

The Universarium, a highly refined research tool by means of which scientists can deduce future evolution, becomes contaminated with colonies of sub-microorganisms. Have they spawned from organisms infiltrating the system from outside or have they originated inside? And if so, is there truth in the Theory of Spontaneous Formation of Organic Sublife, which suggests that minute particles of inanimate matter can, under certain unique but not unlikely conditions, undergo a transformation into the most elementary form of organic life from which other advanced forms can evolve in a measurable period?

Sometimes I wonder if the vast cost and effort which are continuously expended on the space programme are justified. Now don't misunderstand me. I am neither carping traditionalist nor anti-science campaigner, and I am aware of the enormous long-term benefits which will accrue, if not for us, then for the generations unborn, from space investigation and exploration. Besides, I earn my living from the space programme, so I have every reason to hope and work for its success.

In the course of my work I see much of the various projects which are under way, and in consequence I learn quite a lot about the problems and snags which bedevil the research teams. It makes me a little despondent at times when I see a promising or costly project delayed and sometimes abandoned altogether because of some ostensibly minor or trifling fault.

I'm Chief Cleanliness Technician at the new Universarium over at North Eastern. I've been there since it was commissioned nearly two years ago, and I enjoy my job. It's interesting, absorbing work, reasonably exacting, and as a government-sponsored association we use only the most modern and sophisticated of equipment, which helps considerably.

Inevitably, I suppose, all is not bright and rosy. I have never liked my immediate boss, the Hygienic Systems Manager. He's an unpleasant, chronically suspicious type who imagines that everyone is trying to cheat or hoodwink him in some way.

He is convinced that I and his other subordinates deliberately waste time and take neither interest nor pride in our work. This is a miserable, unfair attitude on his part, for, hampered as we are by him, a good and willing spirit prevails among us, as in other parts of the industry.

I am no authority on medical matters, but having had the misfortune to observe him at close quarters over a fairly long time, I have concluded that some form of neurotic compulsion makes him attempt continually to enhance his self-esteem by denigrating those who are in his charge. He's always looking for mistakes and, not infrequently, finding them. Mostly they are due to the unsettling effect he has on personnel, and perhaps a subconscious urge to hit back at him does tend to misguide our efforts now and again.

Nevertheless, the recipients of his unstinted condemnation are a good, conscientious bunch who have always played right with me. And that is a sound enough reason for me to do what I can to ensure that none of them are wrongly blamed for the latest botch-up which has come to light.

The first I heard of what had happened was this morning when he – my boss, I mean – called me in just as I was about to go off-duty. He didn't waste any time getting to the point.

'Bugs!,' he snapped as I came into his office. No politeness, formal or otherwise, you will note. No friendly first-name greeting or jocular observation. Just that one terse, absurd utterance.

I resisted the temptation to pass some funny rejoinder, and made myself look intelligently concerned. Although if I were to address *him* in such a fashion I have no doubt his reaction would be scathing and unpleasant.

'Whereabouts?' I replied, for I understood him well enough.

'You'll find out.' He was adopting that manner, half sneering and would-be dramatically suspenseful, which all of us know and cordially detest.

He gave me one of his 'I told you so' leers and went on; 'one of the planetary systems is contaminated.' His pause was triumphant and meaningful, as though there were no need of further explanation. Damn it, he was accusing and judging me before I even knew what was troubling him. I decided it would be best to appear unemotional.

'So?' I answered him expressionlessly. He didn't like it.

' "So?" ' he mimicked. 'Don't you understand, you ——-' On the brink he checked himself from going too far. 'The final trial Omega-plus run has been abandoned. Three months' work wasted because of *your* inefficiency!'

I was wondering when he would get around to this, his favourite charge. Inefficiency! He should know plenty about that.

'But what has happened? I didn't even know we had shut down.'

He gave a savage little snort of hurt at this confession of ignorance, and his manner became even more offensive.

'One at least of the planetary systems is crawling with colonies of sub-microorganisms. The Director is flaming, and well he might be with simulation runs costing close on two millions each . . . . . '

The tirade continued. I could believe his remark about the Director though, for what had happened was a big setback. And here I should explain why the presence of normally harmless life forms was so serious. Although everyone knows what the Universarium is, there is a great deal of misunderstanding of its function. Most of the public think that it is merely a gigantic scale model of the known universe; a vastness of cold, black depth and innumerable glimmers of light.

Well, so it is, but it is much more besides. True enough, it is a scale model, except that, from considerations of size, much of the outer regions of the known cosmos are not included and the linear scale is somewhat compressed near the boundaries. It is, however, much more than a mere model for illustrative or demonstration purposes.

The most lavish and ambitious project of its type, the Universarium is an almost exact replica of the real thing, apart from the details which I have just mentioned, and allowing also for various scale and model factors which I don't understand and which are not in my province anyway.

In it can be simulated all manner and modes of astrophysical phenomena, representing situations both real and hypothetical. Runs can be made from which the past and future evolution of the universe may be deduced. Or the Universarium can be used, in conjunction with mathematical and scientific theory, to give information on the interaction of the many physical and chemical forces which exist around us in the real universe.

It is understandable that, with a research tool of such vast comprehensiveness, conditions must be very carefully controlled. The various properties of the bodies representing the countless stars and their systems, their emissivities, temperatures, densities, gravitational and electromagnetic characteristics, and their linear, angular and precessional velocities, to name a few, are all specified to very fine limits. So you will appreciate the deviations and inaccuracies which can be caused by a film of vermin infesting the surface of a model world, especially if that particular world plays a critical role in the experiment in process.

And that's why the Director was flaming, as the Hygienic Systems Manager put it, and why I was suffering a barrage of rhetorical criticism.

'Have the Decontamination Crew established the origin of the bugs?' I cut in on the fluent stream of accusations. I had a suspicion of what he would say next. I was right.

'It's not *seepage*!' He was becoming still more emotional and offensive, as he always does at the slightest sign of conflict. 'The boundary detectors aren't even flickering.'

'Well, what is it?'

'Isn't it obvious?' No more obvious than you are, I thought. I have never anywhere met anyone more predictable, more stereotyped and less capable of subtlety and understanding than our Manager.

'I wish it were,' I answered him. He made a suspicious, distrustful noise.

'The primary induction cleansing has obviously been ineffective, and as Chief Cleanliness Technician the responsibility rests squarely on you.'

'Oh, does it? I don't think it is *necessarily* my fault or that of my squad if, and I say *if*, the installation cleansing has not been perfect.' I did not relish the scene which I knew would ensue, but I had no intention of taking anyone else's blame.

'I would remind you,' I went on, 'that it is impossible to guarantee absolute sterility of all materials and components, and also that *I* did not prepare the sterilizing specification.'

'Infestation is *not* inevitable.' It was debatable which was more absurd; his dogmatic pronouncement or the theatrical tone of menace in his voice.

'I am sorry, but I beg to differ. Until absolute sterility of ingoing materials and instruments can be guaranteed, I am afraid we will be plagued by pests.'

He knew as well as I did that to be certain of radiating to destruction every single sub-microorganism residing on the surface or *inside* the materials used would take so long that in practice no tests would ever be done. All materials, probes and detectors, which are installed within the gigantic, shallow ellipsoidal shell which houses the model universe, are first sterilized by my squad in the Cleansing Chambers which adjoin the main vessel.

The survival rate of minute organisms subjected to our treatment is certainly less than one in ten to the twelfth, but even that is enough to lead to local infestation eventually. When this happens the Decontamination Crew take over. Their province is inside the shell, one might say. We are responsible for shell sealing, however.

My boss was obviously anxious that someone else – anyone else – should take whatever blame or stigma might result from the inquiry which would take place. If he could demonstrate that I were inefficient (that word again) and that a greater incidence of pest infiltration was occurring in consequence, or if he could get the Director to believe this, then my own survival, at any rate in a professional sense, would be doubtful.

It was obvious that he was racking his wits for some crushing retort to my assertion of the inevitability of contamination. When all else fails he usually pulls rank. He did so.

'Listen,' he spoke emphatically. 'I hold my job here only so long as I continuously demonstrate my competence. The same goes for everyone under me. There will be no clangers in my department!' Spoken like a true son of the stars! If only the Director had been present to witness these stern and noble sentiments. I smiled inwardly but kept my deadpan expression.

'These colonies may not have spawned from infiltrating organisms anyway.' I was determined to have my say. He looked at me sharply.

'Where *did* they come from, then?'

'They may have originated inside the Enclosure, for all we know.'

'How?'

'Look,' I said. 'I'm only a tech; I can't dream up theories on the origin of infra-primitive life, but I am aware of the controversy currently raging over – er, whatsisname's theory – the Theory of Spontaneous Formation of Organic Sublife – .'

That was as far as I got. Nothing upsets my boss more than evidence of intellectual activity among his subordinates. I don't know if he is afraid that one of us might get his job, or if his sense of mental superiority is offended. Whatever the reason, he just cannot accept the idea that anyone beneath his professional level is capable of original thought or rational argument.

He was not prepared to remain passively silent while I lectured him, as he saw it, on a subject on which he was an acknowledged expert. His reaction was colourful, to put it mildly.

A short while later, when he was once more reasonably coherent, he instructed me very sternly to pay more attention to my work and less to matters which did not concern me.

I told him that any matter reflecting on my proficiency, or that of my team, *did* concern me, and that set him off again. It would be silly, of course, for me to pretend that I understand the technicalities of the theory I referred to, but the basic notion is straightforward enough.

Simply, the argument is that minute particles of inanimate matter can, under certain unique but not unlikely conditions, undergo a transformation into the most elementary form of organic life, from which, it is now known, other more advanced forms can evolve in a measurable period. I'm not saying that's what happened in the Universarium, but I think it is an eventuality which should be considered in the search for the cause of the bugs which clog up the works, in a manner of speaking.

The Manager wouldn't hear of it, and finally, for the sake of peace, I backed

Chris Hamley

'The specimens were vile things; generated of slime, living on filth and in death returning to it. Teeming millions, obscenely prolific and versatile. Spawning endlessly; using, ingesting, cannibalizing each other . . .'

down a little. I'd made my point. Moreover, I'm a fairly observant individual, and I've seen a number of examples of my boss's incompetence; enough to ensure that, if he sees fit to sacrifice me to appease *his* boss, I'll pull him down with me. I think he is beginning to have an inkling of the situation, which does no harm.

At that moment he received a message stating that decontamination action was about to begin, so we made our way to an Operational Viewing Theatre to watch the Decontamination Squad de-bugging the system. They would follow the normal procedure of stepping up the radiation from the system sun; as good a means as any, and certainly much easier than entering the enclosure for close quarters work, with all the sterilizing precautions entailed. Most of the energy radiators representing the countless little simulated stars are of the new Mark 7 Series, probably the most realistic models used up to now.

The main space-oramic screen fascinated me, as always. I knew that the affected system would not be discernible, but I paused, charmed and awed by the cloud of tiny, unwinking points of cold white fire, with here and there a bright spangle shining against the black, depthless reaches of simulated space.

The Manager was muttering and growling his annoyance at my distraction from the immediate business awaiting our attention, so I joined him at one of the near-viewing screens.

The incredible achievement of the creators of the Universarium, that of realizing close detail on such a vast scale, never fails to overwhelm me. As we watched, a tiny speck of light, one among millions in the sector illustrated on the screen, grew large and bright.

The spot became larger, obscuring more and more of the other dots. Soon its shape and spectral distribution characteristic were distinct. I had no need to study the coded reference, glowing beneath the screen, to determine the identity of the galaxy whose image was still growing and now dominated the screen. It was the one which is invariably presented for the public on open-days, and as such is very familiar to me.

Now the constituent stars of the galaxy, our galaxy, were becoming separately visible in the dazzling white band spread across the screen. Unlike the space-oramic screen, whose energy sensors are all located in the shell, the near-viewing screen utilizes tiny monitor photo-detectors which actually move about inside the enclose. The picture we were watching was obtained by several of these small discs which were homing gradually on the affected stellar system.

The procedure we had just witnessed seemed almost to repeat itself, as a particular bright speck began to surpass its neighbours. Bigger and bigger it grew. Its energy characteristic was also familiar, I realized uneasily. Yes, the code reference confirmed my apprehension!

Now the planets were becoming visible. Three – four – six – seven – eight; there was the ninth. One of the planets, presumably the affected or worst affected one, was looming large on the screen. Oh, no – !

I did not dare look at the boss. He said it, just the same.

'Yes, our very own system and planet. Imagine that!'

I felt myself turning red; who wouldn't under those circumstances? For a while I gaped foolishly as the tiny photo-discs slowly approached the contaminated model. There was no mistaking our own mother-world, third from the sun, and its diminutive pock-marked satellite.

The fresh, clean beauty and soft hues which bid welcome to homebound space-travellers were sadly marred, however. The fat crescent illumined by the sun, away on the right of the screen, was defaced by a dirty stain which, if past experience were a reliable indication, was compounded of a variety of sub-microorganisms, their waste products and habitations.

The miniature sun was growing brighter. It whitened and flared almost unbearably as the Decontamination Crew increased the temperature. We watched the film of slimy filth fade and wither on the surface of the lazily spinning globe. The cleansing radiation bathed the model world while it made ten revolutions on its axis. Then, barely perceptibly at first, the sun began to dim gradually.

Soon it was once more the warm, cheerful, yellow ball we know so well.

'That's that,' the Manager pronounced predictably. His voice was strained and held an unmistakably jeering note. He looked at me pointedly and went on, 'now we spend a further three months initiating another accelerated physical run.' Before I could reply he had turned and gone.

In my own way I felt as badly about the test as he did. A lot of painstaking care and wearisome, tedious effort had gone into it. Now it was all cancelled out in the space of moments. The experimental conditions would be knocked completely haywire both by the contaminating sub-life, and by the drastic measures adopted to sterilize the system.

For all the comprehensive, minimum-error data logging, so many factors would be affected that reproduction of test conditions, as they were prior to infestation, would be practically obtainable only by restarting the run from the beginning.

And as for the model of our own world happening to be the one contaminated – there was no significance other than coincidence, long as the odds were, and for all the distress of the Hygienic Systems Manager. It could just as easily have been any of countless billions more. All the same I was glad I had not been with the Director in his private theatre, when that tarnished crescent appeared on the screen.

I made my way from the theatre, thinking somewhat morosely of my boss's obsessional, neurotic bickering. One of these days I'll tell him what I think of him, the –, no matter. In a sense I suppose he is not to blame, for he is clearly temperamentally unsuited to his duties. I doubt whether he could cope effectively with any position of responsibility, in fact.

I was so immersed in such inspiring reflections that I almost collided with my opposite number in the Decontamination Crew, as he emerged from a branch corridor.

He was fully pre-occupied with his own problems, although he greeted me pleasantly enough. Life could be worse, he assured me on my enquiry. Then, as we strolled along a common path, he blathered on about residual burn-outs, depth probes and pulse resonators and a host of other precautionary and sensing devices with which he was combatting the contamination problem.

The monologue had halted. I became aware belatedly that the Chief Biotechnician had asked me a direct question.

'Would you like to see some?' he repeated.

'Sorry – ?' I queried. 'Oh – specimens. Yes; I would be interested.' I should have gone off duty long enough since but, as I mentioned earlier, I enjoy my work.

We had arrived at the Optical Lab, and as we entered he embarked on a grumbling harangue. Did I think it right that he should have to travel so far on account of his own lab not having a microscope powerful enough to examine his specimens? Then he complained of the Hygienic Systems Manager's unpleasantness on learning of the discovery of the pest colony. The Manager had accused him of gross neglect of his duties, exemplified in particular by the poor state of the detectors, which he alleged were insensitive, inefficient, in fact, and insufficiently maintained.

I made various placatory but non-committal comments and wondered what I had done to deserve this continuing onslaught of recrimination. I was glad when we arrived at the appropriate microscope, and the Chief Biotech's catalogue of woe died away as interest in his work took precedence in his intellect.

He quickly and deftly manipulated controls, activating the 'scope, adjusting the focus, setting the illumination and changing the pan for one adapted to take the sampler disc carrier he had brought from the Enclosure. Sampler discs are so small as to be invisible, and for this reason are transported in special carriers.

The carrier slid home into the receptacle slot and, responding to the appropriate photo-signal, the infinitesimally minute disc began to disgorge its cargo of neutraltape, inside which the specimens were preserved and mounted ready for inspection.

'There they are . . . . . horrid brutes, aren't they?' the Chief Biotech commented as the image of the nearly transparent neutraltape and its contents began to move slowly across the screen. He moved to adjust the stereo-control and obscured the screen momentarily. I had already seen enough to agree with him. They were certainly not the most attractive forms of life I had encountered. I studied the procession of grotesque little objects while my colleague supplied a narrative in which an undeniable deficiency of objective, scientific interest was more than compensated by the fervour of his feelings.

'. . . . . vile things; generated to slime, living on filth and in death returning to it. Teeming millions, obscenely prolific and versatile. Spawning endlessly; using, ingesting, cannibalizing each other . . . . . '

'Look at this one,' he cried, and with a sudden motion he stopped the tape. His voice was high-pitched, the words coming in unnatural, staccato bursts. What an emotional type!

It was a particularly unattractive specimen which he indicated. The body was long and looked sickly-soft for all its protective covering. A fuzz-covered nodule protruded at one end.

'That's where the creature's control/sensor complex is housed,' the Chief Biotech explained, interpreting my conjectural glance. 'If you can use the term "complex" in connection with such a primitive thing as this.'

In addition to the control nodule, the thing had four long appendages, two of which would be for locomotion and the others for manipulation. Materials which appeared to have been derived from other creatures covered most of its body, the visible parts of which were a pinky off-white colour.

'. . . . . squirming, slimy monsters.' My friend was still at it, and was becoming quite worked-up. I regarded him curiously and had to fight an impulse to comment, 'Why, I didn't know you cared –.'

He was becoming more distressed every second. Suddenly his control slipped and he fairly shot through the spectrum, radiating on almost every emotional band and easily surpassing the gorgeous display of my boss earlier in the day. I was amused but not really surprised to perceive a couple of colours which were completely new in my experience. It was fortunate that the specimens were sealed in neutraltape. Without protection they would have been seared instantly by his furious emissions.

What a state to get himself into over a few wretched organic life specimens! All at once I experienced a flashing shift of compassion, and his emotional condition wasn't in the least funny.

'Hey, take it easy,' I urged gently. 'This is no way to be.'

These few simple words did apparently comfort him, for the violent spectral fluctuations moderated, and settled into a reasonably normal band pattern.

'You're right; you're right,' he replied, showing his gratitude with a wistful shading of purple. He was calmer now, though still deeply dispirited. 'I think I had better take my holiday. Spend a few days in the sun, perhaps; soak in some good, health-giving energy.'

I followed his gaze beyond the lab window and over the fresh, beautiful landscape of gold and black-daubed orange to where the sun, our own, incomparable sun, blazed high in the sky.

And then I felt a convulsive tautening of my own photo-thermal features; a nervous escalation into regions of unpleasantly high frequency. Was it my imagination, or was the sun shining more brightly than usual? Was that floating disc about to flare whitely as its miniature had done? No; of course not, silly. I relaxed again. My friend's neurotic condition appeared to be catching.

'Yes,' I agreed; 'a visit to our ancestral home will do you a world of good.' Then I laughed at my little unintentional joke, and he joined in, despite his dejection.

He slipped away quietly, a sad-toned shimmering bundle of radiances. *That* specimen, or rather its image, was still sprawled across the screen of the microscope. No wonder the poor old Biotech suffered such attacks. It was making me quite ill just to look at it.

Protoplasm – ugh!

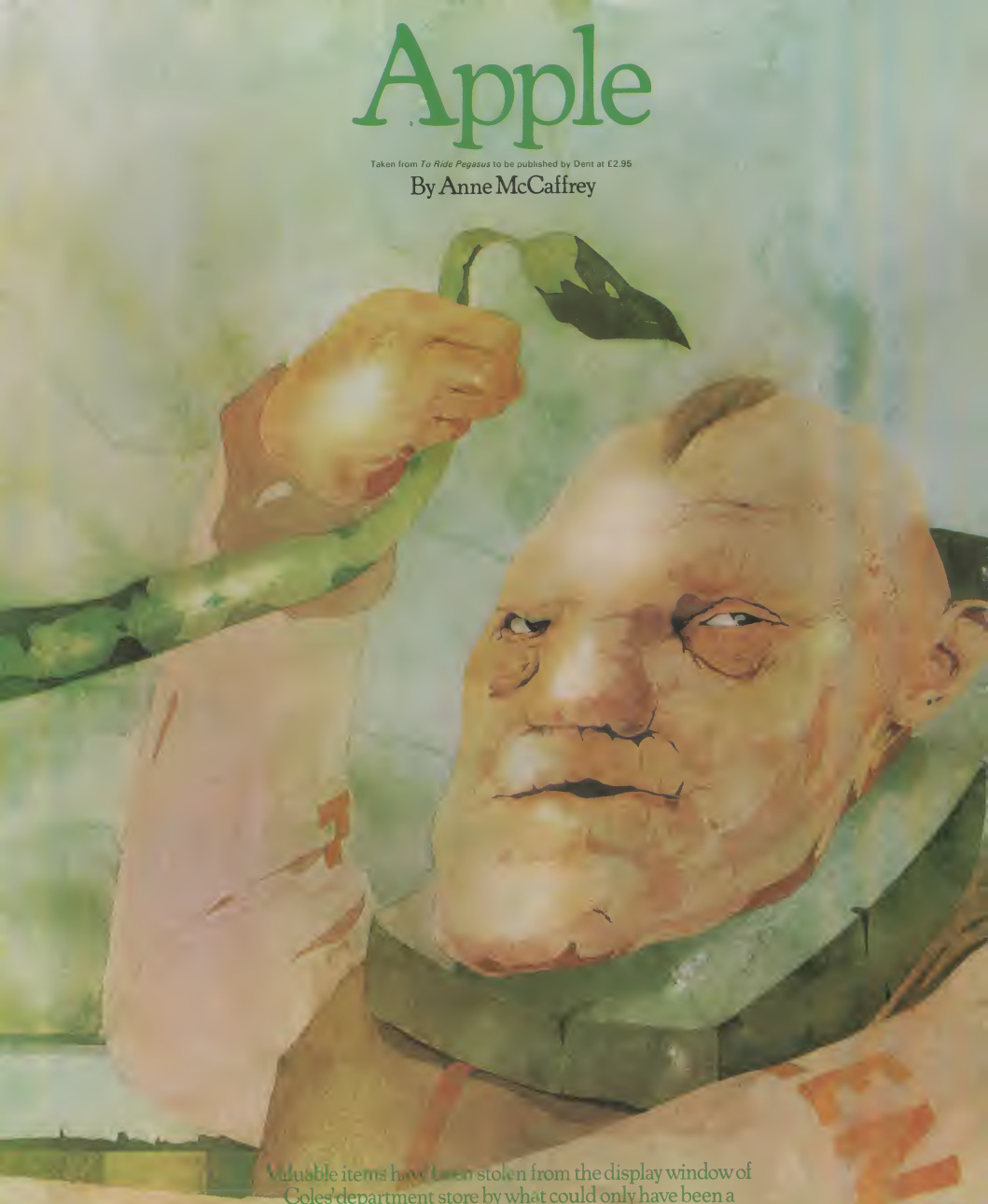
Painting by Eddie Jones

SCIENCE FICTION
NEW ENGLISH LIBRARY MONTHLY

Apple

Taken from *To Ride Pegasus* to be published by Dent at £2.95

By Anne McCaffrey



Valuable items have been stolen from the display window of Coles' department store by what could only have been a parapsychic individual using one of his many talents—telekinesis. Is the larcenist one of the 'Talents' registered with the East American Parapsychic Centre or a 'wild' Talent using his powers of psi for his own ends? With only two weeks to go before the Bill which will provide legal protection for registered talents becomes law, this is a most frustrating incident for those in charge of the Centre—and the police have a down on them all the way.

Ian Pollock

The theft was the lead morning 'cast and ruined Daffyd op Owen's appetite. As he listened to the description of the priceless sable coat, the sapphire necklace, the couture model gown and the jewel-strap slippers, he felt as if he were congealing to his chair as his breakfast cooled and hardened on the plate. He waited, numbed, for the commentator to make the obvious conclusion: a conclusion which would destroy all that the East American Parapsychic Centre had achieved so slowly, so delicately. For the only way in which such valuable items could have been removed from a store dummy in a scanned, warded, very public display window in the five-minute period between the fixed TV frames was by kinetic energy.

'The police have several leads and expect to have a solution by evening. Commissioner Frank Gillings is taking charge of the investigation.

'"I keep my contractual obligations to the City," Gillings is reported to have told the press early this morning as he personally supervised the examination of the display window at Coles, Michaels and Charny Department Store. "I have reduced street and consensual crimes and contained riot activity. Jerhattan is a safe place for the law-abiding. Unsafe for law-breakers."'

The back-shot of Gillings's stern face was sufficient to break op Owen's stasis. He rose and strode toward the comunit just as it beeped.

'Daffyd, you heard that 'cast?' The long, unusually grim face of Lester Welch appeared on the screen. 'God-dammit, they promised no premature announcement. Mediamen!' His expression boded ill for the first unwary reporter to approach him

Over Les's shoulder, op Owen could see the equally savage face of Charlie Moorfield, duty officer of the control room of the Centre.

'How long have *you* known about the theft?' Op Owen couldn't quite keep the reprimand from his voice. Les had a devoted habit of trying to spare his superior, particularly these days when he knew op Owen had been spreading himself very thin in the intensive public educational campaign.

'Ted Lewis snuck in a cautious advice as soon as Headquarters scanned the disappearance. He also can't "find" a thing. And, Dave, there wasn't a wrinkle or a peak between 7:03 and 7:08 on any graph that shouldn't be there, with every single Talent accounted for!'

'That's right, Boss,' Charlie added. 'Not a single Incident to account for the kinetic "lift" needed for the heist.'

'Gillings is on his way here,' said Les, screwing his face up with indignation.

'Why?' Daffyd op Owen exploded. 'Didn't Ted clear us?'

'Christ, yes, but Gillings has been at Cole's and his initial investigation proves conclusively to him that one of our people is a larcenist. One of our women, to be precise, with a secret yen for sable, silk and sapphires.'

Daffyd forced himself to nullify the boiling anger he felt. He could not afford to cloud reason with emotion. Not with so much at stake. Not with the Bill which would provide legal protection for Talents only two weeks away from passing.

'You'll never believe me, will you, Dave,' Les said, 'that the Talented will always be suspect?'

'Gillings has never cavilled at the use of Talents, Lester.'

'He'd be a goddamned fool if he did.' Lester's eyes sparkled angrily. He jabbed at his chest. '*We've* kept street and consensual crime low. Talent did his job for him. And now he's out to nail us. With publicity like this, we'll never get that Bill through. Christ, what luck! Two bloody weeks away from protection.'

'If there's no Incident on the graphs, Les, even Gillings must admit to our innocence.'

Welch rolled his eyes heavenwards. 'How can you be so naive, Dave? No matter what our remotes prove, that heist was done by a Talent.'

'Not one of ours.' Daffyd op Owen could be didactic, too.

'Great. Prove it to Gillings. He's on his way here now and he's out to get us. We've all but ruined his spotless record of enforcement and protection. That hits his credit, monetary and personal.' Lester paused for a quick breath. 'I told you that public education programme would cause more trouble than it's worth. Let me cancel the morning 'cast.'

'No.' Daffyd closed his eyes wearily. He didn't need to resume that battle with Les now. In spite of this disastrous development, he was convinced of the necessity for the campaign. The general public must learn that they had nothing to fear from those gifted with a parapsychic Talent. The series of public information programmes, so carefully planned, served several vital purposes: to show how the many facets of Talent served the community's best interests; to identify those peculiar traits that indicated the possession of a Talent; and most important, to gain public support for the Bill in the Senate which would give Talents professional immunity in the exercise of their various duties.

'I haven't a vestige of Talent, Dave,' Les went on urgently, 'but I don't need it to guess some dissident in the common mass of have-nots listened to every word of those 'casts and put what you should never have aired to good use . . . for him. And don't comfort me with how many happy clods have obediently tripped up to the Clinic to have their minor Talents identified. One renegade apple's all you need to sour the barrell'

The Parapsychology Centre was formed to organise the special abilities of the Talents—telepathy, clairvoyance, teleportation and telempathy.

'Switch the 'cast to the standard recruiting tape. To pull the whole series would be worse. I'm coming right over.'

Daffyd op Owen looked down at the blank screen for a long moment, gathering strength. It was no precog that this would be a very difficult day. Strange, he mused, that no precog had foreseen this. No. *That* very omission indicated a wild Talent, acting on the spur of impulse. What was it Les had said? 'The common mass of have-nots?' Even with the basic dignities of food, shelter, clothing and education guaranteed, the appetite of the have-not was continually whetted by the abundance that was not his. In this case, hers. Daffyd op Owen groaned. If only such a Talent had been moved to come to the Centre where she could be trained and used. Where had their so carefully worded programming slipped up? She could have had the furs, the jewels, the dresses on overt purchase . . . and enjoyed them openly. The Centre was well enough endowed to satisfy any material yearning of its members. Surely Gillings would admit that.

Op Owen took a deep breath and exhaled regret and supposition. He must keep his mind clear, his sensitivities honed for any nuance that would point a direction toward success.

As he left his shielded quarters at the back of the Centre's extensive grounds, he was instantly aware of tension in the atmosphere. Most Talented persons preferred to live in the Centre, in the specially shielded buildings that reduced the 'noise' of constant psychic agitation. The Centre preferred to have them here, as much to protect as to help their members. Talent was a double-edged sword; it could incise evil but it neatly separated its wielder from his fellow man. That was why these broadcasts were so vital. To prove to the general public that the psychically gifted were by no means supermen. Research had indicated there were more people with the ability than would admit it. There were, however, definite limitations to most Talents.

The Parapsychic had been raised, in Daffyd's lifetime, to the level of a science with the development of the Goosegg, ultra-sensitive electroencephalographs which could record, and identify the type of 'Talent' by the minute electrical impulses generated in the cortex by the application of psychic powers. Daffyd op Owen sometimes thought the word 'power' was the villain in perpetuating the public misconceptions. Power means 'possession of control' but such synonyms as 'domination,' 'sway,' 'command' leapt readily to the average mind and distorted the actual definition.

Daffyd op Owen was roused from his thoughts by the heavy beat of a copter. He turned onto the path leading directly to the main administration building and had a clear view of the Commissioner's marked copter landing on the flight roof, to the left of the control tower with its forest of antennal decorations.

Immediately he perceived a reaction of surprise, indignation and anxiety. Surely every Talent who'd heard the news on the morning 'cast and realized its significance could not be surprised by Gillings's arrival. Op Owen quickened his pace.

'*Orley's loose!*' The thought was as loud as a shout.

People paused, turned unerringly towards the long low building of the Clinic where applicants were tested for sensitivity and trained to understand and use what Talent they possessed: and where the Centre conducted its basic research in psionics.

A tall, heavy figure flung itself from the Clinic's broad entrance, charged down the lawn, in a direct line to the tower. The man leaped the ornamental garden, plunged through the hedges, swung over the hood of a parked lawn-truck, straight-armed the overhanging branches of trees, and brushed aside several men who tried to stop him.

'Project reassurance! Project reassurance!' the bull-horn from the tower advised. 'Project happiness!'

'*Get those cops in my office!*' Daffyd projected on his own as he began to run towards the building. He hoped that Charlie Moorfield or Lester had already done so. Orley didn't look as if anything short of a tranquilizer bullet would stop him. Who had been dim-witted enough to let the telempath out of his shielded room at a time like this? The moron was the most sensitive barometer to emotion Daffyd had ever encountered and he was physically dangerous if aroused. By the speed of that berserker-charge, he had soaked up enough fear / anxiety / anger to dismember the objects he was homing in on.

The only sounds now in the grounds were those of op Owen's shoes hitting the permaplast of the walk and the thud-thud of Orley's progress on the thick lawn. One advantage of being Talented is efficient communication and total comprehension of terse orders. But the wave of serenity / reassurance was not penetrating Orley's blind fury: the openness dissipated its effect.

Three men walked purposefully out of the administration building and down the broad apron of steps. Each carried slim-barrelled hand weapons. The man on the left raised and aimed his at the audibly-panting, fast approaching moron. The shot took Orley in the right arm but did not cause him to falter. Instantly the second man aimed and fired. Orley lost stride for two paces as the shot penetrated his thigh but incredibly he recovered. The third man—op Owen recognized Charlie Moorfield—waited calmly as Orley rapidly closed the intervening distance. In a few more steps Orley would crash into him. Charlie was swinging out of the way, his gun slightly raised for a chest shot, when the moron staggered and, with a horrible groan, fell to his knees. He tried to rise, one clenched fist straining towards the building.

Instantly Charlie moved to prevent Orley from gouging his face on the coarse-textured permaplast.

'He took two double-strength doses, Dave,' Moorfield exclaimed with some awe as he cradled the moron's head in his arms.

'He would. How'n'hell did he get such an exposure?'

Charlie made a grimace. 'Sally was feeding him on the terrace. She hadn't heard the news 'cast. Said she was concentrating on keeping him clean and didn't "read" his growing restlessness as more than response to her until he burst wide open.'

'Too much to hope that our unexpected guests didn't see this?'

Charlie gave a sour grin. 'They caused it, Boss. Stood there on the roof, giving Les a hard time, broadcasting basic hate and distrust. You should've seen the dial on the psychic atmosphere gauge. No wonder Orley responded.' Charlie's face softened as he glanced down at the unconscious man. 'Poor damned soul. Where is that med-team? I "called" them when he got outside.'

Daffyd glanced up at the broad third floor windows that marked his office. Six men stared back. He put an instant damper on his thoughts and emotions, and mounted the steps.

The visitors were still at the window, watching the med-team as they lifted the huge limp body onto the stretcher.

'Orley acts as a human barometer, gentlemen, reacting instantly to the emotional aura around him,' Les was saying in his driest, down-east tone. To op Owen's wide-open mind, he emanated a raging anger that almost masked the aura projected by the visitors. 'He has an intelligence factor of less than 50 on the New Scale which makes him uneducable. He is, however, invaluable in helping identify the dominating emotion of seriously disturbed mental and hallucinogenic patients which could overcome a rational telepath.'

Police Commissioner Frank Gillings was the prime source of the fury which had set Harold Orley off. Op Owen felt sorry for Orley, having to bear such anger, and sorrier for himself and his optimistic hopes. He was momentarily at a loss to explain such a violent reaction from Gillings, even granting the validity of Lester Welch's assumption that Gillings was losing face, financial and personal, on account of this affair.

He tried a 'push' at Gillings's mind to discover the covert reasons and found the man had a tight natural shield, not uncommon for a person in high position, privy to sensitive facts. The burly Commissioner gave every outward appearance of being completely at ease, as if this were no more than a routine visit, and not one hint of his surface thoughts leaked. Deep-set eyes, barely visible under heavy brows, above fleshy cheeks in a swarthy face that missed nothing, flicked from Daffyd to Lester and back.

Op Owen nodded to Ted Lewis, the top police 'finder' who had accompanied the official group. He stood a little to one side of the others. Of all the visitors, his mind was wide open. Foremost was the thought that he hoped Daffyd would read him, so that he could pass the warning that Gillings considered Orley's exhibition another indication that Talents could not control or discipline their own members.

'Good morning, Commissioner. I regret such circumstances bring you on your first visit to the Centre. This morning's newscast has made us all extremely anxious to clear our profession.''

Gillings's perfunctory smile did not acknowledge the tacit explanation of Orley's behaviour.

'I'll come to the point, then, Owen. We have conclusively ascertained that there was no break in store security measures when the theft occurred.' The 'lectric wards and spy-scanner were not tampered with nor was there any evidence of breaking or entering. There is only one method in which sable, necklace, dress and shoes could have been taken from that window in the five minutes between TV scans.

'We regret exceedingly that the evidence points to a person with psychic talents. We must insist that the larcenist be surrendered to us immediately and the merchandise returned to Mr Grey, the representative from Cole's.' He indicated the portly man in a conservative but expensive grey fitted.

Op Owen nodded and looked expectantly towards Ted Lewis.

'Lewis can't "find" a trace anywhere so it's obvious the items are being shielded.' A suggestion of impatience crept into Gillings's bass voice. 'These grounds are shielded.'

'The stolen goods are not here, Commissioner. If they were, they would have been found by a member the instant the broadcast was heard.'

Gillings's eyes snapped and his lips thinned with obstinacy.

'I've told you I can read on these grounds, Commissioner,' Ted Lewis said with understandable indignation. 'The stolen . . .'

A wave of the Commissioner's hand cut off the rest of Lewis's statement. Op Owen fought anger at the insult.

'You're a damned fool, Gillings,' said Welch, not bothering to control his, 'if you think we'd shelter a larcenist at this time.'

'Ah yes, that Bill pending Senate approval,' Gillings said with an unpleasant smile.

Daffyd found it hard to nullify resentment at the smug satisfaction and new antagonism which Gillings was generating.

'Yes, that Bill, Commissioner,' op Owen repeated, 'which will protect any Talent *registered* with a parapsychic centre.' Op Owen did not miss the sparkle of Gillings's deep-set eyes at the deliberate emphasis. 'If you'll step this way, gentlemen, to our remote-graph control system, I believe that we can prove, to your absolute satisfaction, that no registered Talent is responsible. You haven't been here before, Commissioner, so you are not familiar with our method of recording incidents in which psychic powers are used.

'Power, by the way, means "possession of control", personal as well as psychic, which is what this Centre teaches each and every member. Here we are. Charles Moorfield is the duty officer and was in charge at the time of the robbery. If you will observe the graphs, you'll notice that that period—between 7:03 and 7:08 was the time given by the 'cast—has not yet wound out of sight on the storage drums.'

Gillings was not looking at the graphs. He was staring at Charlie.

'Next time, aim at the chest first, mister.'

'Sorry I stopped him at all . . . mister,' replied Charlie, with such deliberate malice that Gillings coloured and stepped towards him.

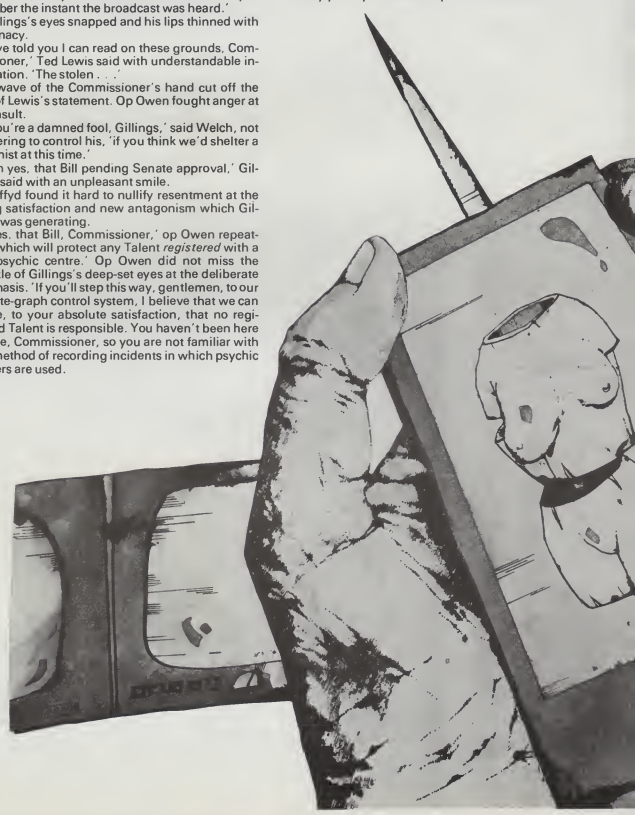
Op Owen quickly intervened. 'You dislike, distrust and hate us, Commissioner,' he said, keeping his own voice neutral with effort. 'You and your staff have prejudged us guilty, though you are at this moment surrounded by incontrovertible evidence of our collective innocence. You arrived here, emanating disruptive emotions—no, I'm *not* reading your minds, gentlemen.' Daffyd had all Gillings's attention with that phrase. 'That isn't necessary. You're triggering responses in the most controlled of us—not to mention that poor witless telempath we had to tranquilize. And, unless you put a lid on your unwarranted hatred and fears, I will have no compunction about pumping you all full of tranks, too!'

'That's coming on mighty strong to a man in your position, Owen,' Gillings said in a tight hard voice, his body visibly tense now.

'You're the one that's coming on strong, Gillings. Look at that dial behind you.'

Gillings did not want to turn, particularly not at op Owen's command, but there is a quality of righteous anger that compels obedience.

'That registers—as Harold Orley does—the psychic intensity of the atmosphere. The mind gives off electrical impulses, Gillings, surely you have to admit that. Law enforcement agencies used that premise for lie detection. Our instrumentation makes those early registers as archaic as space ships make oxcarts. We have ultra-delicate equipment which can measure the minutest electrical impulses of varying frequencies and duration. And this PA dial registers a dangerous high right now. Surely your eyes must accept scientific evidence.



Ian Pollock

'Those rows of panels there record the psychic activity of each and every member registered with this Centre. See, most of them register agitation right now. These red divisions indicate a sixty-minute time span. Each of those drums exposes the graph as of the time of that theft. Notice the difference. Not one graph shows the kinetic activity required of a ''lifter'' to achieve such a theft. But every one shows a reaction to your presence.

'There is no way in which a registered Talent can avoid these graphs. Charlie, were any kinetics out of touch at the time of the theft?'

Charlie, his eyes locked on Gillings, shook his head slowly.

'There never has been so much as a civil misdemeanour by any of our people. No breach of confidence, nor integrity. No crime could be shielded from fellow Talents.

'And can you rationally believe that we would jeopardize years and years of struggle to become accepted as reliable citizens of indisputable integrity for the sake of a fur coat and a string of baubles? When there are funds available to any Talent who might want to own such fripperies?' Op Owen's scorn made the Cole man wince.

'Now get out of here, Gillings. Discipline your emotions and revise your snap conclusion. Then call through normal channels and request our cooperation. Because, believe me, we are far more determined . . . and better equipped . . . to discover the real criminal than you could ever be, no matter what *your* personal stake in assigning guilt might conceivably be.'

Op Owen watched for a reaction to that remark but Gillings, his lips thin and white with anger, did not betray himself. He gestured jerkily towards the one man in police blues.

'Do not serve that warrant now, Gillings!' op Owen said in a very soft voice. He watched the frantic activity of the needle on the PA dial.

'Go. Now. Call. Because if you cannot contain your feelings, Commissioner, you had better maintain your distance.'

It was then that Gillings became aware of the palpable presence of those assembled in the corridor. A wide aisle had been left free, an aisle that led only to the open elevator. No one spoke or moved or coughed. The force exerted was not audible nor physical. It was, however, undeniably unanimous. It prevailed in forty-four seconds.

'My firm will wish to know what steps are being taken,' the Cole's man said in a squeaky voice as he began to walk, with erratic but ever quickening steps, towards the elevator.

Gillings's three subordinates were not so independent, but there was no doubt of their relief as Gillings turned and walked with precise, unhurried strides to the waiting car.

No one moved until the thwapping rumble of the copter was no longer audible. Then they turned for assignments from their director.

City Manager Julian Pennstrak, with a metropolis of some four million to supervise, had a habit of checking up personally on any disruption to the smooth operation of his city. He arrived as the last of the organized search parties left the Centre.

'I'd give my left kidney and a million credits to have enough Talent to judge a man accurately, Dave,' he said as he crossed the room. He knew better than to shake hands unless a Talented offered but it was obvious to Daffyd, who liked Pennstrak, that the man wanted somehow to convey his personal distress over this incident. He stood for a moment by the chair, his handsome face without a trace of his famous genial smile. 'I'd've sworn Frank Gillings was pro-Talent,' he said, combing his fingers through his thick, wavy black hair, another indication of his anxiety. 'He certainly has used your

> 'There is only one method in which sable, necklace, dress and shoes could have been taken from that window. We regret exceedingly that the evidence points to a person with psychic talents.'

people to their fullest capabilities since he became LEO Commissioner.'

Lester Welch snorted, looking up from the map he was annotating with search patterns. 'A man'll use any tool that works . . . until it scratches him, that is.'

'But you could prove that no registered Talent was responsible for that theft.'

' ''A man convinced against his will, is of his own opinion still,'' ' Lester chanted.

'Les!' Op Owen didn't need sour cynicism from any quarter, even one dedicated to Talent. 'No *registered* Talent was responsible.'

Pennstrak brightened. 'You did persuade Gillings that it's the work of an undiscovered Talent?'

Welch made a rude noise. 'He'll be persuaded when we produce both missing person and missing merchandise. Nothing else is going to satisfy either Gillings or Cole's.'

'True,' Pennstrak agreed, frowning thoughtfully. 'Nor the vacillating members of my own Council. Oh, I know, it's a flash reaction but the timing is so goddamned lousy, Dave. Your campaign bore down heavy on the integrity and good citizenship of the Talented.'

'It's a deliberate smear job . . .' Welch began gloomily.

'I thought of that,' Pennstrak interrupted him, 'and had my own expert go over the scanner films. You know the high security risk set-up: rotating exposures on the stationary TV eyes. One frame the model was clothed; next, exposed in all its plastic glory. It was a ''lift'' all right. No possibility of tampering with that film.' Pennstrak leaned forward to Dave, though there was scarcely any need to guard his statements in this company. 'Furthermore, Pat came along. She ''read'' everyone at the store, and Gillings's squad. Not Gillings, though. She said he has a natural shield. The others were all clean . . . at least of conspiracy.' Pennstrak's snide grin faded quickly. 'I made her go rest. That's why there's no one with me.'

Op Owen accepted the information quietly. He had half-hoped . . . it was an uncharacteristic speculation for him. However, it did save time and Talent to have had both store and police checked.

It had become general practice to have a strong telepathic receiver in the entourage of any prominent or controversial public figure. That Talent was rarely identified publicly. He or she usually performed some obvious service so that their constant presence was easily explicable. Pat Tawfik was overtly Pennstrak's chief speech writer.

'I have, however,' Pennstrak continued, 'used my official prerogative to supervise the hunt. There're enough sympathetic people on the public media channels to play down the Talent angle—at my request—but you know what this kind of adverse publicity is going to do to you, this Centre and the Talented in general. One renegade can discredit a hundred honest injuns. So, what can I do to help?'

'I wish I knew. We've got every available perceptive out on the off-chance that this—ah—renegade happens to be broadcasting joy and elation over her heist.'

'Her?'

'The concensus is that while a man might lift furs and jewels, possibly the dress, only a woman would take the shoes, too. Top finders are coming in from other Centres . . .'

'A ''find'' is reported, Boss,' said Charlie over the intercom. 'Block Q.'

As Pennstrak and op Owen reached the map, Welch announced with a groan. 'Gawd, that's a multi-layer apartment zone.'

'A have-not,' added op Owen.

'Gil Gracie made the find, Boss,' Charlie continued. 'And the fur is not all he's found but he's got a problem.'

'You just bet he has,' Les said under his breath as he grimaced down at the map coordinates.

'Charlie, send every finder and perceptive to Block Q. If they can come up with a fix . . .'

'Boss, we got a fix, but there's one helluva lot of similarities.'

'What's the problem?' asked Pennstrak.

'We'll simply have to take our time and eliminate, Charlie. Send anyone who can help.' Then op Owen turned to Pennstrak. 'In reporting a ''find,'' the perceptive is aware of certain particular spatial relationships between the object sought and its immediate surroundings. It isn't as if he has seen the object as a camera sees it. For example, have you ever entered a room, turned down a street, or looked up quickly and had the feeling that you had seen just (and Daffyd made a bracket of his hands) that portion of the scene before, with exactly the same lighting, exactly the same components? But only that portion of the scene, so that the rest was an indistinguishable blur?'

Pennstrak nodded.

' ''Finding'' is like that. Sometimes the Talent sees it in lucid detail, sometimes it's obscured or, as in this case, there are literally hundreds of possibilities . . . apartments with the same light exposure, same scene out the window, the same floor plan and furnishings. Quite possible in this instance since these are furnished, standard subsistence dwellings. Nothing to help us single out, say, Apartment 44E, Building 18, Buhler Street.

'There happens to be a Building 18 on Buhler Street, Boss,' Les Welch said slowly, 'and there are 48 levels, 10 units per floor.'

Pennstrak regarded op Owen with awe.

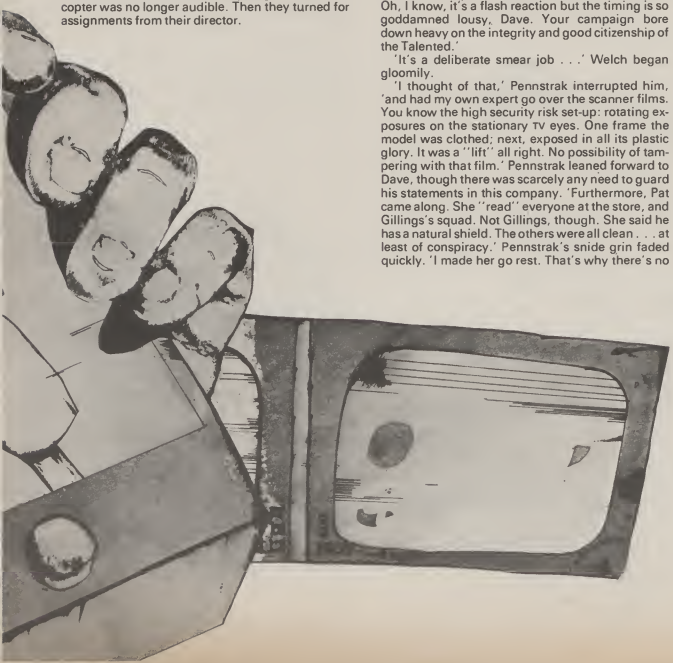
'Nonsense, this office is thoroughly shielded and I'm *not* a precog!'

'Before you guys took the guesswork out of it, there were such things as hunches,' Pennstrak suggested.

For op Owen's peace of mind and Lester's pose of misogyny, it was neither Building 18 nor Buhler Street nor Apartment 44. It was Apartment 1E, deep in the centre of Q Block. No one had entered nor left it—by normal means—since Gil Gracie and two other finders had made a precise fix. Gil handed op Owen the master key obtained from the dithering super.

'My Gawd,' Pennstrak said in a voice muted with shocked surprise, as they swung open the door. 'Like an oriental bazaar.'

'Indiscriminate pilfering on a wholesale basis.' Op Owen corrected him, glancing around at the rich brilliant velvet drapes framing the dingy window to the wildly clashing pillows thrown on the elegant Empire loveseat. A marble-topped table was a jumble of pretty vases, silver boxes and goblets. Priceless china held decaying remains of food. Underneath the table were jaggedly opened, empty cans bearing the label of an extremely expensive caterer. Two empty champagne bottles pointed green, blind eyes in their direction. A portable colour 'caster was piled with discarded clothing; a black-lace sheer body stocking draped in an obscene posture across the inactive screen. 'A magpie's nest rather,' he sighed, 'and I'd hazard that Maggie is very young and has been poor all her



life until . . .' He met Pennstrak's sympathetic gaze. 'Until our educational programme gave her the hints she needed to unlock her special Talent.'

'Gillings is going to have to work with you on this, Dave,' Pennstrak said reluctantly as he reached for the intercom at his belt. 'But first he's going to have to apologize.'

Op Owen shook his head vigorously. 'I want his cooperation, Julian, grudged or willing. *When* he really believes in Talent, then he will apologize voluntarily . . . and obliquely.'

To op Owen's consternation, Gillings arrived noisily in the cowlike lab copter, sirens going, lights flashing.

'Don't bother now,' op Owen said to Pennstrak for he could see the City Manager forming a furious reprimand. 'She might have been warned by the finders' activity anyhow.'

'Well, she's certainly been warned off now.' Pennstrak stalked off, to confer with one of his aides just as Gillings strode into the corridor with his technicians.

According op Owen and Gracie the merest nod, Gillings began issuing crisp orders. He knew his business, op Owen thought, and he evidently trusted *these* technicians for he didn't bother to crowd into the tiny apartment to oversee them.

'As soon as your men have prints and a physical profile, Commissioner, we'd like to run the data through our computer. There's the chance that the girl did take advantage of the open Talent test the Centre has been advertising.'

'You mean you don't *know* who it is *yet*?'

'I could "find" the coat only because I *knew* what it looked like,' Gil Gracie said, bristling at Gillings's manner.

'Then where is it?' and Gillings gestured preemptorily to the sable-less apartment.

'These are the shoes, Commissioner,' said one of his team, presenting the fragile strap and jewelled footwear, now neatly sealed in clear plastic. 'Traces of dirt, dust, fleck of nail enamel and from the scope imprint, I'd say they were too big for her.'

Gillings stared at the shoes uninterestedly. 'No sign of the dress?'

'Still looking.'

'Odd that you people can't locate a girl with bare feet in a sable coat and a bright blue silk gown?'

'No odder than it is for your hundreds of patrolmen throughout the city, Commissioner, to overlook a girl so bizarrely dressed,' said op Owen with firm good humour. 'When you "saw" the coat, Gil, where was it?'

'Thrown across the loveseat, one arm hanging down to the floor. I distinguished the edge of the sill and the tree outside, the first folds of the curtain and the wall heating unit. I called in, you sent over enough finders so that we were able to eliminate the similarities. It took us nearly an hour . . .'

'Were you keeping an "eye" on the coat all the time?' Gillings demanded in a voice so devoid of expression that his contempt was all the more obvious.

Gil flushed, bit his lip and only partially inhibited by op Owen's subtle warning, snapped back, 'Try keeping your physical eye on an object for an hour!'

'Get some rest, Gil,' op Owen said gently. He waited until the finder had turned the corner. 'If you are as determined to find this criminal as you say you are, Commissioner Gillings, then do not destroy the efficiency of my staff by such gratuitous criticism. In less than four hours, on the basis of photographs of the stolen objects, we located this apartment . . .'

'But not the criminal, who is still in possession of a sable coat, which you found once but have now unaccountably lost.'

'That's enough, Gillings,' said Pennstrak who had rejoined them. 'Thanks to your arrival, the girl must know she's being sought and is shielding.'

Pennstrak gestured toward the dingy windows of the flat, through which the vanes of the big copter were visible. A group of children, abandoning the known objects of the development play-yard, had gathered at a respectful, but curiosity-satisfying distance.

'Considering the variety of her accomplishments,' op Owen said, not above using Pennstrak's irritation with his Commissioner to advantage, 'I'm sure she knew of the search before the Commissioner's arrival, Julian. Have any of these items been reported, Commissioner?'

'That console was. Two days ago. It was on "find," too.'

'She has been growing steadily bolder, then,' op Owen went on, depressed by Gillings's attitude. And depressed that such a Talent had emerged twisted, perverted, selfish. Why? Why? 'If your department ever gets the chronology of the various thefts, we'd appreciate the copy.'

'Why?' Gillings turned to stare at op Owen, surprised and irritated.

'Talent takes time to develop—in ordinary persons. It does not, like the ancient goddess Athena, spring full-grown from the forehead. This girl could not, for instance, have lifted that portable set the first time she used her Talent. The more data we have on . . . the lecture is ill-timed.'

Gillings's unspoken 'you said it' did reach op Owen whose turn it was to stare in surprise.

'Well, your "finders" are not novices,' the Commissioner said aloud. 'If they traced the coat once, why not again?'

'Every perceptive we have is searching,' op Owen said. 'But, if she was able to leave this apartment after Gil found the coat, taking it with her, because it obviously is not here, she also is capable of shielding herself and that coat. And, until she slips that guard, I doubt we'll find it or her.'

The report on the laboratory findings was exhaustive. There was a full set of prints, foot and finger. None matched those on file in the city records, or Federal or Immigration. She had not been tested at the Centre. Long coarse black hair had been found. Analysis of skin flakes suggested an olive complexion. Thermophotography placed her last appearance in the room at approximately the time the four 'finders' fixed on her apartment, thus substantiating op Owen's guess. The thermal prints also revealed that she was of slender build, approximately 5'4", weighing 105 pounds. Stains on a paring knife proved her to possess blood type O. No one else had occupied the apartment within the eight day range of the thermography used.

From such records, the police Extrapolator made a rough sketch of 'Maggie O' which she was called for want of a better name. The sketch was taken around the neighbourhood with no success. People living in Block Q didn't bother people who didn't bother them.

It was Daffyd op Owen who remembered the children crowding the police copter. From them he elicited the information that she was new in the building. (The records indicated that the apartment should be vacant.) She was always singing, dancing to the wall 'caster, and changing her clothes. Occasionally she'd play with them and bring out rich food to eat, promising they could have such good things if they'd think hard about them. While the children talked, Daffyd 'saw' Maggie's face reflected in their minds. The police extrapolator had been far short of the reality. She was not much older than the children she had played with. She had not been pretty by ordinary standards but she had been so 'different' that her image had registered sharply. The narrow face, the brilliant eyes, slightly slanted above sharp cheekbones, the thin, small mouth and the pointed chin were unusual even in an area of ethnic variety.

This likeness and a physical description were circulated quickly to be used at all exits to the city and all transportation facilities. It was likely she'd try to slip out during the day-end exodus.

The south and west airstrips had been under a perceptive surveillance since the search had been inaugurated. Now every facility was guarded.

Gil Gracie 'found' the coat again.

'She must have it in a suitcase,' he reported on the police-provided handunit from his position in the main railroad concourse. 'It's folded and surrounded by dark. It's moving up and down. But there're so many people. So many suitcases. I'll circulate. Maybe the find'll fix itself.'

Gillings gave orders to his teams on the master unit which had been set up in the Centre's control room to coordinate the operations.

'You better test Gil for precog,' Charlie muttered to op Owen after they'd contacted all the sensitives. 'He *asked* for the station.'

'You should've told me sooner, Charlie. I'd've teamed him with a sensitive.'

'Look at that,' Charlie exclaimed, pointing to a wildly moving needle on one of the remotes.

Les was beside it even as the audio for the Incident went on.

'Not that track! Oh! Watch out! Baggage. On the handcart! Watch out. Move, man. Move! To the right. The right! Ahhhh.' The woman's voice choked off in an agonized cry.

Daffyd pushed Charlie out of the way, to get to the speaker.

'Gil, this is op Owen. Do not pursue. Do not pursue that girl! She's aware of you. Gil, come in. Answer me. Gil . . . Charlie, keep trying to raise him. Gillings, contact your men in the station. Make them stop Gil Gracie.'

'Stop him? Why?'

'The precog. The baggage on the handcart,' shouted Daffyd, signalling frantically to Lester to explain in detail. He raced for the emergency stairs, up the two flights, and slammed out onto the roof. Gasping physically for breath, he clung to the high retaining wall and projected his mind to Gil's.

He knew the man so well, had trained Gil when an employee brought in the kid who had a knack for locating things. Op Owen could see him ducking and dodging through the trainward crowds, touching suitcases, ignoring irate or astonished carriers; every nerve, every ounce of him receptive to the 'feel' of a dense, dark sable fur. And so singleminded that Daffyd could not 'reach' him.

But op Owen knew the instant the loaded baggage cart swerved and crushed the blindly intent Talent against an I-beam. He bowed his head, too fully cognizant that a double tragedy had occurred. Gil was lost . . . and so now was the girl.

There was no peace from his thoughts even when he returned to the shielded control room. Lester and Charlie pretended to be very busy. Gillings was. He directed the search of the railway station, arguing with the station-master that the trains were to be held and that was that. The drone of his voice began to penetrate op Owen's remorse.

'All right, then, if the Talents have cleared it and there's no female of the same height and weight, release that train. Someone tried the johns, didn't they? No, Sam, you can detain anyone remotely suspicious. That girl is clever, strong, and dangerous. There's no telling what else she could do. But she damn well can't change her height, weight and blood type!'

'Daffyd. Daffyd.' Lester had to touch him to get his attention. He motioned op Owen towards Charlie who was holding out the handunit.

'It's Cole's, sir.'

Daffyd listened to the effusively grateful store manager. He made the proper responses but it wasn't until he had relinquished the handunit to Charlie that the man's excited monologue made sense.

'The coat, the dress and the necklace have reappeared on the store dummy,' op Owen said. He cleared his throat and repeated it loud enough to be heard.

'Returned?' Gillings echoed. 'Just like that? Why, the little bitch! Sam, check the ladies rooms in that station. Wait, isn't there a discount dress store in that station? Have them check for missing apparel. I want an itemized list of what's gone, and an exact duplicate from their stock shown to the sensitives. We've got her scared and running now.'

'Scared and running now.' Gillings's smug assessment rang ominously in Daffyd's mind. He had a sudden flash. Superimposed over a projection of Maggie's thin face was the image of the lifeless store dummy, elegantly re-clad in the purloined blue gown and dark fur. 'Here, take them back. I don't want them anymore. I didn't mean to kill him. I didn't mean to. See, I gave back what you wanted. Now leave me alone!'

Daffyd shook his head. Wishful thinking. Just as futile as the girl's belated gesture of penance. Too much too soon. Too little too late.

'We don't want her scared,' he said outloud. 'She was scared when she toppled that baggage cart.'

'She *killed* a man when she toppled that baggage cart, op Owen!' Gillings was all but shouting.

'And if we're not very careful, she'll kill others.'

'If you think I'm going to velvet glove a homicidal maniac . . .'

A shrill tone issuing from the remote unit forced Gillings to answer. He was about to reprimand the caller but the message got stunned attention.

'We can forget the paternal bit, Owen. She knocked down every one of your people and mine at the Oriole Street entrance. Your men are unconscious. Mine and about twenty or more innocent commuters are afflicted with blinding headaches. Got any practical ideas, Owen, on catching this monster you created?'

'Oriole? Was she heading east or west?' He had to stop that line of talk.

'Does it matter?'

'If we're to catch her it does. And we must catch her. She's operating at a psychic high. There's no telling what she's capable of now. Such Talent has only been a theoretic possibility . . .'

Gillings lost all control on himself. The fear and hatred burst out in such a wave that Charlie Moorfield, caught unawares, erupted out of his chair towards Gillings in an instinctive defence reaction.

'Gillings!' 'Charlie!' Les and Daffyd shouted together, each grabbing the wild combatants. But Charlie, his face white with shock at his own reaction, had himself in hand. Sinking weakly back into his chair, he gasped out an apology.

'You mean, you *want* to have more monsters like her and him?' Gillings demanded. Between his voice and the violent emotions, Daffyd's head rang with pain and confusion.

'Don't be a fool,' Lester said, grabbing the Commissioner by the arm. 'You can't spew emotions like that around a telepath and not get a reaction. Look at Daffyd! Look at Charlie! Christ man, you're as bad as the scared mixed-up kid . . .' and then Les dropped Gillings's arm and stared at him in amazement. 'Christ, you're a telepath yourself!'

'Quiet, everybody,' Daffyd said with such urgency he had their instant attention. 'I've the solution. And there's no time to waste. Charlie, I want Harold Orley airbound in the Clinic's copter heading south to the Central Station in nothing flat. We'll correct course en route. Gillings, I want two of the strongest, most stable patrolmen on your roster. I want them armed with fast-acting, double-strength trank guns and airborne to rendezvous near Central Station.'

'Harold?' Les echoed in blank astonishment. Then relief coloured his face as he understood Daffyd's intentions. 'Of course. Nothing can stop Harold. And no one can read him coming.'

'Nothing. And no one,' op Owen agreed, bleakly.

Gillings turned from issuing his orders to see an ambulance copter heading west across the sky.

'We're following?'

Daffyd nodded and gestured for Gillings to precede him to the roof. He didn't look back but he knew what Les and Charlie did not say.

She had been seen running east on Oriole. And she was easy to follow. She left people doubled up with nausea and crying with head pains. That is, until she crossed Boulevard.

'We'll head south, south east on an intercept,' Gillings told his pilot and had him relay the correction to the ambulance. 'She's heading to the sea?' he asked rhetorically as he rummaged for the correct airmap of the city. 'Here. We can set down at Seaman's Park. She can't have made it that far . . . unless she can fly suddenly.' Gillings looked up at op Owen.

'She probably could teleport herself,' Daffyd answered, watching the Commissioner's eyes narrow in adverse reaction to the admission. 'But she hasn't thought of it yet. As long as she can be kept running, too scared to think . . .' That necessity plagued Daffyd op Owen. They were going to have to run her out of her mind.

Gillings ordered all police hovercraft to close in on the area where she was last seen, blocks of residences and small businesses of all types.

By the time the three copters had made their rendezvous at the small Park, there were no more visible signs of Maggie O's retreat.

As Gillings made to leave the copter, Daffyd op Owen stopped him.

'If you're not completely under control, Gillings, Harold will be after you.'

Gillings looked at the director for a long moment, his jaw set stubbornly. Then, slowly, he settled into the seat and handed op Owen a remote comunit.

'Thanks, Gillings,' he said, and left the copter. He signalled to the ambulance to release Harold Orley and then strode across the grass to the waiting officers.

The two biggest men were as burly as he could wish. Being trained law enforcers, they ought to be able to handle Orley. Op Owen 'pushed' gently against their minds and was satisfied with his findings. They possessed the natural shielding of the untemperamental which made them less susceptible to emotional storms. Neither Webster or Heis were stupid, however, and had been briefed on developments.

'Orley has no useful intelligence. He is a human barometer, measuring the intensity and type of emotions which surround him and reacting instinctively. He does not broadcast. He only receives. Therefore he cannot be harmed or identified by . . . by Maggie O. He is the only Talent she cannot "hear" approaching.'

'But, if he reaches her, he'd . . .' Webster began, measuring Harold with the discerning eye of a boxing enthusiast. Then he shrugged and turned politely to op Owen.

'You've the double strength tranks? Good. I hope you'll be able to use them in time. But it is imperative that she be apprehended before she does more harm. She has already killed one man . . .'

'We understand, sir,' Heis said when op Owen did not continue.

'If you can, shoot her. Once she stops broadcasting, he'll soon return to a manageable state.' But, Daffyd amended to himself, remembering Harold sprawled on the ground in front of the building, not soon enough. 'She was last seen on the east side of the Boulevard, about eight blocks from here. She'd be tired, looking for someplace to hide and rest. But she is also probably radiating sufficient emotion for Harold to pick up. He'll react by heading in a straight line for the source. Keep him from trying to plough through solid walls. Keep your voices calm when you speak to him. Use simple commands I see you've got handunits. I'll be airborne; the copter's shielded but I'll help when I can.'

Flanking Harold, Webster and Heis moved west along Oriole at a brisk, even walk: the two officers in step, Harold's head bobbing above theirs, out of step—a cruel irony.

Daffyd op Owen turned back to the copter. He nodded to Gillings as he seated himself. He tried not to think at all.

As the copters lifted from the Park and drifted slowly west amid other air traffic, op Owen looked sadly down at the people on the streets. At kids playing on the sidewalks. At a flow of men and women with briefcases or shopping bags, hurrying home. At snub-nosed city cars and squatty trucks angling into parking slots. At the bloated cross-city helibuses jerking and settling to disgorge their passengers at the street islands.

'He's twitching,' reported Heis in a dispassionate voice.

Daffyd flicked on the handset. 'That's normal He's beginning to register.'

'He's moving faster now. Keeps wanting to go straight through the buildings.' Reading Heis's undertone, op Owen knew that the men hadn't believed his caution about Orley ploughing through solids. 'He's letting us guide him, but he keeps

pushing us to the right. You take his other arm, Web. Yeah, that's better.'

Gillings had moved to the visual equipment along one side of the copter. He focused deftly in on the trio, magnified it and threw the image on the pilot's screen, too. The copter adjusted direction.

'Easy, Orley. No, don't try to stop him, Web. Stop the traffic!'

Orley's line of march crossed the busier wide north-south street. Webster ran out to control the vehicles. People turned curiously. Stopped and stared after the trio.

'Don't,' op Owen said as he saw Gillings move a hand towards the bullhorn. 'There's nothing wrong with her hearing.'

Orley began to move faster now that he had reached the farther side. He wanted to go right through intervening buildings.

'Guide him left to the sidewalk, Heis,' op Owen said. 'I think he's still amenable. He isn't running yet.'

'He's breathing hard, Mr Owen,' Heis sounded dubious. 'And his face is changing.'

Op Owen nodded to himself, all too familiar with the startling phenomenon of watching the blankness of Orley's face take on the classic mask of whatever emotions he was receiving. It would be a particularly unnerving transition under these conditions.

'What does he show?'

'I'd say . . . hatred,' Heis's voice dropped on the last word. Then he added in his usual tone, 'He's smiling, too, and it isn't nice.'

They had eased Orley to the sidewalk heading west. He kept pushing Webster to the right and his pace increased until it was close to a run. Webster and Heis began to gesture people out of their way but it would soon be obvious to the neighbourhood that something was amiss. Would it be better to land more police to reassure people and keep their emanations down? Or would they broadcast too much suppressed excitement at police interference? She'd catch that. Should he warn Heis and Webster to keep their thoughts on Harold Orley? Or would that be like warning them against all thoughts of the camel's left knee?

Orley broke into a run. Webster and Heis were hard put to keep him to the sidewalk.

'What's in the next block?' op Owen asked Gillings.

The Commissioner consulted the map, holding it just above the scanner so he could keep one eye on the trio below.

'Residences and an area parking facility for interstate trucking.' Gillings turned to op Owen now, his heavy eyebrows raised in question.

'No, she's still there because Orley is homing in on her projection.'

'Look at his face! My God!' Heis exclaimed over the handunit. On the screen, his figure had stopped. He was pointing at Orley. But Webster's face was clearly visible to the surveillers and what he saw unnerved him.

Orley broke from his guides. He was running, slowly at first gathering speed steadily, mindless brushing aside anything that stood in his way. Heis and Webster went after him but both men were shaking their heads as if something were bothering them. Orley tried to plunge through a brick store wall. He bounced off it, saw the unimpeded view of his objective and charged forward. Webster had darted ahead of him, blowing his whistle to stop the oncoming traffic. Heis alternately yelled into the handunit and at startled bystanders. Now some of them were afflicted and were grabbing their heads.

'Put us on the roof,' op Owen told the pilot. 'Gillings, get men to cover every entrance and exit to that parking lot. Get the copters to hover by the open levels. The men'll be spared some of the lash.'

It wouldn't do much good, op Owen realized, even as he felt the first shock of the girl's awareness of imminent danger.

'Close your mind,' he yelled at the pilot and Gillings. 'Don't think.'

'My head, my head.' It was Heis groaning.

'Concentrate on Orley,' op Owen said, his hands going to his temples in reaction to the knotting pressure. Heis's figure on the scanner staggered after Orley who had now entered the parking facility.

Op Owen caught the mental pressure and dispersed it, projecting back reassurance/help/protection/compassion. *He* could forgive her Gil Gracie's death. So would any Talent. If she would instantly surrender, somehow the Centre would protect her from the legal aspects of her act. Only surrender now.

Someone screamed. Another man echoed that piercing cry. The copter bucked and jolted them. The pilot was groaning and gasping. Gillings plunged forward, grabbing the controls.

Op Owen, fighting an incredible battle, was blind to physical realities. If he could just occupy all the attention of that over-charged mind . . . hold it long enough . . . pain/fear/black/red/moiled-orange/purples . . . breathing . . . shock. Utter disbelief/fear/loss of confidence. Frantic physical effort.

Concrete scraped op Owen's cheek. His fingers bled as he clawed at a locked steel exit door on the roof. He could not enter. *He had to reach her* FIRST!

Somehow his feet found the stairs as he propelled himself down the fire escape, deliberately numbing his mind to the intensive pounding received. A pounding that became audible.

Then he saw her, fingers clawing for leverage on the stairpost, foot poised for the step from the landing. A too-thin adolescent figure, frozen for a second with indecision and shock; strands of black hair like vicious scars across a thin face, distorted and ugly from the tremendous physical and mental efforts of the frantic will. Her huge eyes, black with insane fury and terror, bloodshot with despair and the salty sweat of her desperate striving for escape, looked into his.

She knew him for what he was; and her hatred crackled in his mind. Those words—after Gil Gracie's death—had been hers, not his distressed imagining. She had known him then as her real antagonist. Only now was *he* forced to recognize her for what she was, all she was—and regrettably, all she would not be.

He fought the inexorable decision of that split-second confrontation, wanting more than anything else in his life that it did not have to be so.

She was the wiser! She whirled!

She was suddenly beyond the heavy fire door without opening it. Harold Orley, charging up the stairs behind her, had no such Talent. He crashed with sickening force into the metal door. Daffyd had no alternative. She had teleported. He steadied the telempath, depressed the lockbar and threw the door wide.

'The Parapsychic had been raised to the level of a science with the development of the Goosegg, ultra-sensitive electroencephalographs which could record and identify a "Talent" by the minute electrical impulses generated in the cortex by the application of psychic powers.'

Orley was after the slender figure fleeing across the dimly lit, low-ceiling concrete floor. She was heading towards the down ramp now.

'Stop, stop,' op Owen heard his voice begging her.

Heis came staggering from the stairway.

'Shoot him. For Christ's sake, shoot Orley, Heis,' op Owen yelled.

Heis couldn't seem to coordinate. Op Owen tried to push aside his fumbling hands and grab the trank gun himself. Heis's trained reflexes made him cling all the tighter to his weapon. Just then, op Owen heard the girl's despairing shriek.

Two men had appeared at the top of the ramp. They both fired, the dull reports of trank pistols accentuated by her choked gasp.

'Not her. Shoot Orley. Shoot the man,' op Owen cried but it was too late.

Even as the girl crumpled to the floor, Orley grabbed her. Grabbed and tore and beat at the source of the emotions which so disturbed him. Beat and tore and stamped her physically as she had assaulted him mentally.

Orley's body jerked as tranks hit him from all sides, but it took far too long for them to override the adrenal reactions of the overcharged telempath.

There was pain and pity as well as horror in Gillings's eyes when he came running onto the level. The police stood at a distance from the blood-spattered bodies.

'Gawd, couldn't someone have stopped him from getting her?' the copter pilot murmured, turning away from the shapeless bloodied thing half-covered by Orley's unconscious body.

'The door would have stopped Orley but he,' and Heis grimly pointed at op Owen, 'opened it for him.'

'She teleported through the door,' op Owen said weakly. He had to lean against the wall. He was beginning to shudder uncontrollably from reaction. 'She had to be stopped. Now. Here. Before she realized what she'd done. What she could do.' His knees buckled. 'She teleported through the door!'

Unexpectedly it was Gillings who came to his aid, a Gillings whose mind was no longer shielded but broadcasting compassion and awe, and understanding.

'So did you.'

The phrase barely registered in op Owen's mind when he passed out.

'That's all that remains of the late Solange Boshe,' Gillings said, tossing the file reel to the desk. 'As much of her life as we've been able to piece together. Gypsies don't stay long anywhere.'

'There're some left?' Lester Welch asked, frowning at the three-inch condensation of fifteen years of a human life.

'Oh there are, I assure you,' Gillings replied, his tone souring slightly for the first time since he had entered the office. 'The tape also has a lengthy interview with Bill Jones, the cousin the social worker located after Solange had recovered from the bronchial pneumonia. He had no idea,' Gillings hastily assured them, 'that there is any reason other than a routine check on the whereabouts of a runaway county ward. He had a hunch,' and Gillings grimaced, 'that the family had gone on to Toronto. They had. He also thought that they had probably given the girl up for dead when she collapsed on the street. The Toronto report substantiates that. So I don't imagine it will surprise you, op Owen, that her tribe, according to Jones, are the only ones still making a living at fortune-telling, palm-reading, tea-leaves and that bit.'

'Now, just a minute, Gillings,' Lester began, bristling. He subsided when he saw that his boss and the Police Commissioner were grinning at each other.

'So . . . just as you suspected, op Owen, she was a freak Talent. We know from the ward nurses that she watched your propaganda broadcasts during her hospitalization. We can assume that she was aware of the search either when Gil Gracie "found" the coat, or when the definite fix was made. It's not hard to guess her motivation in making the heist in the first place, nor her instinctive desire to hide.' Gillings gave his head an abrupt violent jerk and stood up. He started to hold out his hand, remembered and raised it in a farewell gesture. 'You are continuing those broadcasts, aren't you?'

Lester Welch glared so balefully at the Commissioner that op Owen had to chuckle.

'With certain deletions, yes.'

'Good. Talent must be identified and trained. Trained young and well if they are to use their Talent properly.' Gillings stared op Owen in the eye. 'The Boshe girl was bad, op Owen, bad clear through. Listen to what Jones said about her and you won't regret Tuesday too much. Sometimes the young are inflexible, too.'

'I agree, Commissioner,' Daffyd said, escorting the man to the door as calmly as if he hadn't heard what Gillings was thinking so clearly. 'And we appreciate your help in the cover yarns that explained Tuesday's odd occurrences.'

'A case of mutual understanding,' Gillings said, his eyes glinting. 'Oh, no need to see me out. *I* can open this door.'

That door was no sooner firmly shut behind him than Lester Welch turned on his superior.

'And just who was scratching whose back then?' he demanded. 'Don't you dare come over innocent, either, Daffyd op Owen. Two days ago that man was your enemy, bristling with enough hate and distrust to antagonize me.'

'Remember what you said about Gillings Tuesday?'

'There's been an awful lot of idle comment around here lately.'

'Frank Gillings *is* telepathic.' Then he added as Lester was choking on the news: 'And he doesn't want to be. So he's suppressed it. Naturally he'd be antagonistic.'

'Hah!'

'He's not too old, but he's not flexible enough to adapt to Talent, having denied it so long.'

'I'll buy that. But what was that parting shot—"I can open this door"?' Lester mimicked the Commissioner's deep voice.

'I'm too old to learn new tricks, too, Les. I teleported through the roof door of that parking facility. He saw me do it. And *she* saw the memory of it in my mind. If she'd lived, she'd've picked my mind clean. And—I didn't *want* her to die.'

Op Owen turned abruptly to the window, trying to let the tranquility of the scene restore his equilibrium. It did—until he saw Harold Orley plodding along the path with his guide. Instantly a white, wide-eyed, hair-streaked face was superimposed over the view.

The intercom beeped and he depressed the key for his sanity's sake.

'We've got a live one, Boss,' and Sally Iselin's gay voice restored him. 'A strong precog with kinetic possibilities. And guess what?' Sally's excitement made her voice breathless. 'He said the cop on his beat told him to come in. He doesn't want any more trouble with the cops so he . . .'

'Would his name be Bill Jones?'

'However did you know?'

'And that's no precog, Sally,' op Owen said with a ghost of a laugh, aware he was beginning to look forward again. 'A sure thing's no precog, is it Les?'

I have been reading the extract of *Time Enough For Love* published in SFM vol 1 no 3 and would like to point out that 'Eros' is correct as physical love, but 'Agape' which should be spelt 'Agapan' means Christian love. Robert Heinlein is looking for 'Philein' which means spiritual love.

Having seen several issues now it seems ripe to suggest that it might be wise to give a little more space to fantasy, especially dealing with Metaphysics and allied subjects. Many people are genuinely interested in these but don't know the subject names.

In any case thank you for providing interesting art and food for thought.
R H Cunningham (*Orpington, Kent*)

I shall take the bull by the horns and suggest you modify the format and content of SFM. There certainly is a demand for full colour artwork as your letters page proves, but surely you have overdone it and the tail is wagging the dog. I believe that most sf fans are looking primarily for a good read.

There are thirty-two pages (not twenty-eight as B Herns stated) including the cover. The four middle pages should be full colour artwork and detachable as also should the cover which also contains full colour artwork. The remaining twenty-four pages should be stapled together, since they are big pages I suggest you use the room fully by using the small type as in *Time Enough For Love* rather than the large type as in *Star Port*. I also suggest you use illustrations sparingly and they should never cover more than a quarter of the page and that the book extracts should be dropped. It is annoying to have a story left hanging in the air, so why not reprint short stories or non-fiction extracts instead.

I would like to see some articles on the exploration of the sea such as an extract from *The Coast of Coral* by Arthur C Clarke and some features on astronomy by Fred Hoyle and Patrick Moore. I would also like to see a series of articles under the general heading *Controversy* which like the BBC2 series would deal with social and scientific problems. May I suggest that a suitable essay to start off the series would be *What The War Is Doing For Women* by HG Wells which is included in his collection *Journalism and Prophecy*. He argues that women won the vote in spite of, not because of, the women's suffragette movement.
K Oldacre (*Staffordshire*)

While reading the letters page of SFM vol 1 no 3 I read a letter from JN Lee of Wolverhampton who was doing a thesis on the history of sf. If he doesn't already know Pan's *A Century of Science Fiction* edited by Damon Knight, this could prove quite useful to him. It is excellent reading with histories of the first trips to the moon in a balloon by Edgar Allan Poe way back in 1835, short stories and extracts from HG Wells, Arthur C Clarke, Asimov and others.
Chris Holt (*Radford, Nottingham*)

I agree with Charles Alexander (letters page SFM vol 1 no 4) who would like to see SFM appeal to a wider readership by giving space to less commercial artwork. How about some Paolozzi?

I feel your standard of fiction generally speaking is low toe, and was pleased to see that in vol 1 no 4 you are starting to branch out with better quality commercial writers like Bob Shaw and experimenting with fiction styles and content range in works by Grahame Leman and Ron Owen.

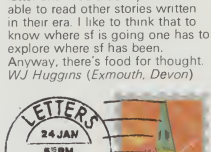
As a result of your policy relaxation (enrichment) you will get more readers. Incidentally Vol 1 No 4 is the first of your series I have purchased.
Michael Butterworth (*Ed. Corridor* New Writings Quarterly)

It is said that the strength of any magazine can be gauged by reading the letters page. Well, reading through most of the letters I was first inclined to agree with J Jones of Northallerton that your magazine wouldn't last six months as most of your letters read like school reports, nothing very controversial in them.

That was until I read the comments of JT Parker of Swindon who suggested that SFM should 'steer a course between the "new" sf . . . and the traditional adventures . . . of the old school'. Surely the middle of the road would lead to the speedy demise

of SFM? I firmly believe that sf is the literature of the future in both senses of the word and should never be hidebound by tradition or fixed by any limits. Wells and Verne were the launching pad, Clarke and Asimov were stopping-off places, Moorcock and Ballard are perhaps new flight paths, but for God's sake let's not put sf into orbit just yet! (However, JT Parker did redeem himself by being aware that sf is also expanding through music as well as literature and art and I hope SFM realises this too.)

Having just put forward a case for publishing 'new' sf in SFM, Michael Ashley's excellent articles on the history of sf magazines then made me realise just how much sf written long before I was born still remains valid today. I'm referring to such authors as Stanley G Weinbaum and Edmond Hamilton. I've read *A Martian Odyssey* by the former and a couple of short stories by the latter and would dearly love to be able to read other stories written in their era. I like to think that to know where sf is going one has to explore where sf has been. Anyway, there's food for thought.
WJ Huggins (*Exmouth, Devon*)



I have just bought and read the latest issue of SFM and I enjoyed it very much. May I suggest you have more stories and features if possible in future, not necessarily cutting down on your excellent prints. What about authors such as Fred Hoyle, Roger Zelazny, Katherine MacLean, Ray Bradbury, etc? I reinforce the views expressed in some letters that more of the music culture form in sf should be exploited in your mag.

As I missed your earlier copies, I would be obliged if you could send me the addresses of the British Science Fiction Association. Also do you have a list and mail order service of all NEL's sf publications?
RJ Frame (*Strathaven, Lanarkshire*)

Ed: *We are starting a new series in SFM 7 entitled Modern Masters of Science Fiction, the idea being to include a brief biography of a well-known author each month, plus a short story by them. No 2 in the series (SFM 8) will feature Ray Bradbury. We are also planning a series of Science Fiction and Music which I hope you'll find interesting. Enquiries regarding membership of the BSFA should be sent to: David Tillston, Membership Secretary, 215 Egerton, Tanhouse 1/2, Skelmersdale, Lancs WN8 6AB. NEL does have a mail order service (See foot of this page for further information).*

I am a middle-aged housewife with a yen to escape, a vivid imagination, interested in ESP, painting, writing and the future.

I could not resist SFM when I saw it on sale, and it appeals to me in every way. The large vivid pictures are fascinating, the stories excellent and thought-provoking – lovely escapism and an incentive to keep writing.

First a short story competition and now a painting competition – what more could anyone ask? Congratulations.
ME Beat (*Mrs*) (*Milton Keynes, Bucks*)

I found *Science Fiction Monthly* a very interesting and colourful magazine but it occurred to me that if they are to be kept loose around people's homes they may become damaged. As I have no wish for this to happen to my copies I would like to know if you intend to produce binders of some description in which the magazines can be kept.
A Elliott (*Bexleyheath, Kent*)

Ed: *We are considering producing binders for the magazine.*

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Certain readers have written to us saying they have been unable to obtain copies of SFM. The magazine is now on firm sale and unless you have a regular order with your local newsagent or have taken out a postal subscription, you may have difficulty in obtaining a copy. To avoid disappointment, please fill in this form and hand it to your newsagent.

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SCIENCE FICTION
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THE GREEN BRAIN. Painting by Bruce Pennington

THE TABERNACLE

By the year 2293 ALL accumulated knowledge in the history of mankind has been recorded in the ultimate computer hidden in the Tabernacle, the brain room of the Vortex.

THE VORTEX

An ideal 300-year-old unisex commune formed in 1999 when industrial society collapsed. It is protected by a gravitational force field from the terrors of the Outlands.

THE OUTLANDS

Once it was called the good Earth. Now it is the desolate, exhausted, polluted wasteland all the world has become except for the lush Vortex.

THE ETERNALS

Members of the Vortex. Highly privileged scientists and intellectuals, eternally young, who have learned all the secrets of Life – except one.

THE EXTERMINATORS

A privileged and physically superior group permitted to breed under strict control to fight the Brutals and support the Vortex.

THE BRUTALS

The last survivors of the dying world outside the Vortex. They live at subsistence level in constant fear of the dreaded Exterminators.

ZARDOZ

A mountain-sized godhead that looms over the Earth taking from its worshippers the substance of Life and giving them the means of Death.

THE APATHETICS

Victims of the pursuit of perfection, they are Eternals who have found the strain of immortality too great and live only for the one thing their society denies them.

THE RENEGADES

Malicious, embittered offenders in the Vortex who would defy and destroy the establishment – if they could only find it.

Zardoz Reviewed

Today's science fiction films have much to live up to. Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* is so far unrivalled and looks like remaining that way for many years to come, but there are other excellent and thought-provoking sf films like *Soylent Green* and *Solaris* which have done much to raise the genre from the depths of *The Lost World* with its plastic and much too obviously manipulated monsters. *Silent Running,* a smaller and much under-rated film is also a miniature gem of its kind. It is a pity, therefore, when this kind of standard is attainable, that Fox / Rank has created a film that fails so badly.

Publicity handouts for *Zardoz* claim that it is every bit as big as *2001*. It isn't. John Boorman (writer, producer and director) has tried to introduce too many standard sf ideas into one film, the end result being one of confusion and contrivance. A group of scientists (the Eternals) shut themselves off from the decaying industrial world of 1990 in a force-field protected 'paradise' (the Vortex). They have the advantages of immortality and a computer (the Tabernacle) in which the accumulated knowledge of the world is stored. The action is centred around Zed (Sean Connery) an Exterminator specially bred by the Eternals to possess the superior physical and mental powers required to subjugate the Brutals who inhabit the Outlands outside the Vortex. The Eternals send Arthur Frayn, initiator of the selective breeding programme which produced Zed, to control the Brutals. This he does through the medium of the god, Zardoz, who is embodied in a huge powered flying stone head. How Zed enters Zardoz and makes his way into the Vortex to destroy the Tabernacle and restore equality between the decadent Eternals and the starving Brutals forms the main part of the film.

The problem of communication in this film begins at once. The dancing head of Arthur Frayn, with painted face and updated velvet Egyptian nemes, is projected against a black screen. With impeccable diction he announces that what we are about to see may well come to pass. As if in immediate refutation of this claim, his face gives way to the massive head of Zardoz lumbering through the murky skies to the accompaniment of background drumming. Zardoz gives orders and guns to the exterminators, with instructions to go forth and kill because procreation is evil. The bizarre spectacle of Sean Connery in scanty red G-string, bandoliers and painted mask distracts from whatever lesson we are meant to learn from the conflict.

Accompanying Zed inside the Vortex, we are bewildered by a series of incongruities which only serve to obscure what might have been a relevant message. Costumes, settings and characters do not convince; nor does the eventual explanation that Zed was bred and educated to be the instrument of destruction of the Eternals. We are left with a meaningless spectacle with nothing in the way of plot or story to hold together the disparate ideas.

The message seems to be that Zed, a mortal capable of suffering the processes of ageing, death, lust and injury, is infinitely more vital, versatile and energetic (and therefore ultimately more valid as a life force) than anyone in the scientifically maintained Vortex 'paradise'. Imperfect man destroys immortal man, and this is how it should be. Isolation is no answer to the problems of the world, nor does any amount of scientific gadgetry remove the necessity for man to resolve for himself the enigmas of life and death. If this is the intended message, one has to dig very deep to extract it from the morass of unnecessary details which obscure it.

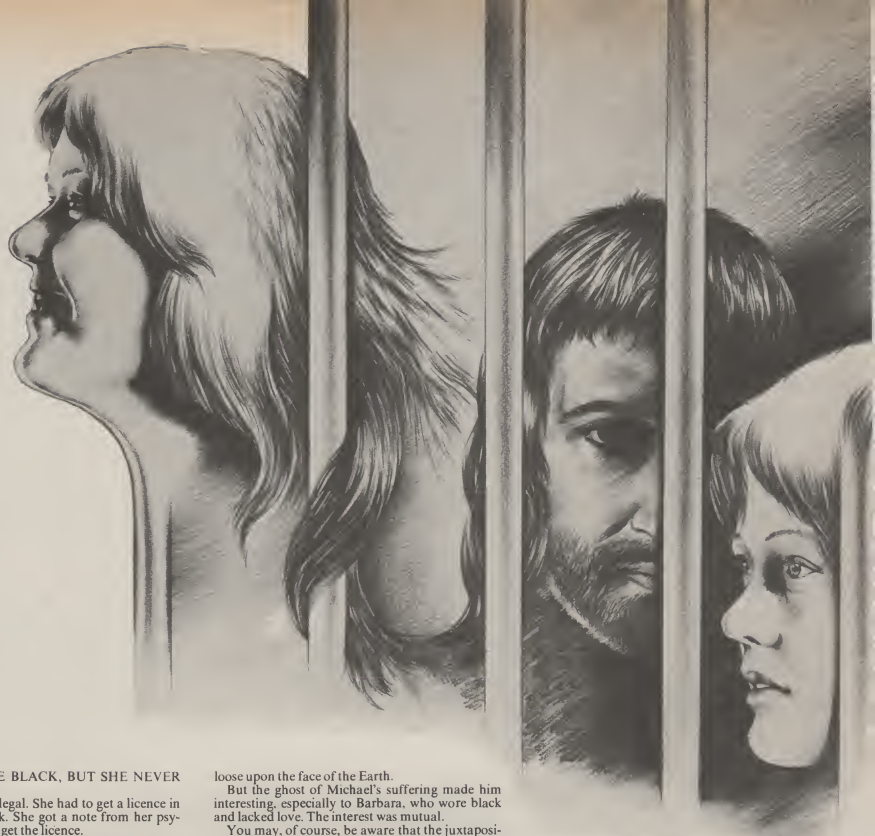
Sean Connery as Zed comes over with some strength, playing a difficult role with a fair amount of realism, despite his absurd costume (or lack of it) and both Charlotte Rampling (Consuella) and Sara Kestelman (May) act with creditable conviction and intensity. John Alderton has perhaps the most interesting part as Friend (a bitter, clear-sighted Renegade) – one which he carries with engaging cynicism.

Perhaps the reason *Zardoz* is not a success is because John Boorman has tried to do too much. The anomalies of the society he has created are just not feasible – and feasibility is of prime importance if the audience is meant to view this film in the light of a possible future.

As it is, the message is hidden in too much distracting detail to be taken really seriously. Echoes of *Planet of the Apes* (Zed, the man, in an animal cage) and *2001* (the implantation of knowledge into Zed's brain by a computer) and symbolic and biblical effects such as the white dove at the very end only add to the overall impression of confusion. No wonder Zed looks bemused at times by the extraordinary society within the Vortex. So will you after two hours of *Zardoz*.

A.R.B.

Illustration courtesy Fox / Rank Distributors
Table showing the structure of society in Zardoz



Ray Vinder

A STORY WITH A HAPPY ENDING

Brian M Stableford

BARBARA WORE BLACK, BUT SHE NEVER MOURNED.

Mourning was illegal. She had to get a licence in order to wear black. She got a note from her psychiatrist in order to get the licence.

Barbara was loved, as everyone in the world was loved. Not to be loved was against the law. She had a Shadow, which had been specially made to love her. Other people also had Shadows which were made to admire, Shadows which were made to flatter, Shadows which were made to sympathize. But they all had to get notes from their psychiatrists in order to get the licences. Only love was universally sanctioned.

Everybody needs love.

Barbara needed a great deal of love. In fact, Barbara was quite a glutton for love, despite the fact that she held no licence for gluttony. For reasons which the Management had never bothered to make clear the more love a Shadow was programmed to deliver, the more tenuous was its appearance. Barbara's Shadow was so faint as to be hardly visible – like a shadow cast by starlight. But still Barbara's craving for love was not quite satisfied. She felt a lack of love which her psychiatrist was at a loss to deal with. Her consumption of the commodity was so great as to deny the most prodigious efforts of the Shadow-manufacturers. There simply were no Shadows which could love any harder, any fonder, any more fiercely than the souped-up model with which she was already equipped.

Yet still she needed more. She never quite went for want of love, and thus avoided classification as psychotic and erasure as an enemy of the state. But she was unable to avoid a modicum of sadness. Her psychiatrist advised that she be given a licence to wear black while he grappled with the problem.

Michael liked Barbara in black. Michael, too, needed a little more than his Shadows could give him, but his psychiatrist was a little confused by the depth and complexity of Michael's needs, and he too was the subject of much pondering. Michael thought about his own problems all the time. That was not illegal, but seemed distinctly unethical in the light of his psychiatrist's sterling efforts. Because Michael was an artist, he was entitled to manifest a certain degree of confusion, and sometimes he got away with a fascinating tinge of suffering, although that was sailing perilously close to an ill wind. The Management, in its almost-infinite wisdom, recognised the needs of the creative kind, exercising benevolence and leniency to almost-liberal lengths, but they could hardly be expected to let suffering loose upon the face of the Earth.

But the ghost of Michael's suffering made him interesting, especially to Barbara, who wore black and lacked love. The interest was mutual.

You may, of course, be aware that the juxtaposition of individuals might precipitate unusual situations. It used to happen quite a lot, but those were chaotic days, and if you remember them you should report immediately for erasure.

There is no point in dwelling upon details which would undoubtedly prove painful to the ordinary reader. Suffice it to say that Barbara and Michael 'fell in love' – a euphemism which must serve to protect you from a host of harsher feelings.

It may have been this unfortunate event which precipitated poor Michael over the edge. He conceived the incredible notion that what he needed sort himself out and find true happiness was a thread of darkness to wrap around his heart, a black stain upon his soul. The Management, in its wisdom, had kept him so sheltered that he simply did not realise that what he was approaching with these poetic phrases was the idea of evil. Had he communicated this feeling to his psychiatrist he would have been instantly committed to prison.

The degeneration of Michael's character became obvious when he actually complained – to Barbara – that there was nowhere in the world that he could discover a thread of darkness to wrap around his heart.

Barbara was shocked, at first, by the insanity of the idea, but psychosis contaminates very quickly, and she soon discovered some appealing quality in the lament. That day, there was nothing in the world that Barbara wanted more than to give a thread of darkness to Michael, that he might use it to fill his need, and thus allow him to love her even more than he already could and did. When she was alone, in the evening, she confessed as much to her Shadow, which was busy loving her as much as was *humanly* possible.

The Shadow listened, as was required of its lovingness, and was saddened (but only because this was similarly demanded of its love – madness spreads!) Shadows cannot weep, of course, but Barbara's Shadow bent its head into its tiny hands and rocked slowly from side to side in order to emphasise the depth of its sincerity and convince Barbara of the ultimacy of its love.

While Barbara slept that night, the Shadow continued to be saddened in accordance with its lovingness. Love *never* sleeps. The law does not allow a Shadow to rest.

The Shadow wallowed in its love-sadness with all of its fragile being. It was incapable of doing anything else. It was the mirror of Barbara's need, and could only respond to the depth and desperation of that need. Love was its purpose and its being, and it was ignorant of all moral considerations.

It is easy to explain the *why* of what happened next, but it is not so easy – and in any case it is forbidden – to say *how*. The mechanics of the miracle were contained within the ethereal nature of the Shadow. Perhaps not even the Manager truly understands the nature of Shadows.

In any event, the Shadow removed itself from Barbara's side while she slept. (This is unusual but not impractical – love is not subject to the inverse square law.) It searched for and found Michael. This took no time at all, although how the Shadow knew where to look is a mystery – love, after all, is blind. Then it transformed itself into a thread of darkness, and wrapped itself around his heart.

When Michael awoke the next morning there was a black stain upon his soul, and a tiny grain of evil was loose upon the face of the Earth.

Alarm bells were already ringing elsewhere, though no one knew why.

Michael wrote a song the moment he got up, built around the dreams which were still in his mind as he woke. It was not a very good song. It was light and

simple, but there was a hint of irony and pessimism and even a suggestion of desolation. He played it through and through on the piano, singing the words quietly and with just the right balance of hope and hopelessness (though he found that the latter was difficult).

He was about to play it through for yet another time when the police broke his door down, surrounded him, anaesthetised him, and carried him away to court.

When Barbara awoke, she found that her Shadow was gone. It was strange, but at first she felt no more than her usual lack of love. Eventually, however, she felt a terrible tinge of worry, and phoned her psychiatrist. While she was trying to explain to him that she was desperately ill, the police smashed all her windows and invaded her apartment in force.

In the hospital, surgeons laboured for hours unwrapping the thread of darkness from Michael's heart. At noon exactly they triumphed, and were able to consign the thread to a tomb of liquid helium, in which it was instantly and completely denatured. Not even evil to the highest power can survive intense cold. Not even *love*.

At noon exactly, Barbara found herself unloved, and collapsed into catatonia. The Management provided a relief Shadow almost immediately, but it did not have the requisite lovepower, and she was in pain all through the trial.

The Management put both Barbara and Michael in prison, and sent their souls away for erasure and remodelling. When they were released, they were called Helen and Simon, and they were awarded a marriage licence on the advice of a psychiatrist.

That is the end of the story.

Simon was an artist and he wrote songs which were all joyful and lovely. Helen wore pale blue, and had a very faint Shadow which was perfectly tuned to her need for love.

The original Shadow had offered its life in order to bring about this perfect ending. There is no greater love than that offered in the sacrifice of life. Shadows are built to love, and the Shadow had loved absolutely. Therefore this ending is absolutely happy.

Isn't it?

NEWS

By Aune R Butt

FILMING of Edgar Rice Burroughs' exciting and spectacular novel *The Land That Time Forgot* has been going on at Shepperton studios for the last four months. The film is being made by Amicus Productions, and is directed by Kevin Connor and produced by Milton Subotsky and Max J Rosenberg, with John Dark as associate producer. *The Land That Time Forgot* is generally regarded as Edgar Rice Burroughs' greatest contribution to the field of sf. It is set during World War I, when a German U-boat in the South Atlantic is captured by the survivors of an Allied ship. With the submarine badly damaged, the German and Allied crews agree to a truce for their common survival, and discover an island which turns out to be a biological record of the earth's history, where millions of years of evolution are encapsulated in the life-span of the monstrous animals and primeval men who live there. Working on the film, which is the most ambitious project ever undertaken by Amicus, will be a team of special-effects experts, headed by Derek Meddings and Roger Dicken. Production design is by Maurice Carter, who has previously worked on the films of *Becket*, *The Battle of Britain*, and *Anne Of The Thousand Days*, and much of the film will be shot on Shepperton's giant 'H' stage. Apart from being festooned by recreations of the prehistoric flora and fauna described in ERB's story, the stage will be flooded with three-quarters-of-a-million gallons of water to form part of the lake in which the submarine is brought to anchor. The producers state that this is to be 'a fascinating and gripping adventure film on a large scale, with one of the most spectacular sets to have been constructed in a British studio for many years'. A warning to ERB devotees – this film is only concerned with the first part of the original trilogy and in no way intends to be a faithful representation of it. The film is scheduled for release at Christmas.

THE TOLKIEN SOCIETY was formed in Britain in 1969 with the purpose of providing a focal point for the many people interested in the works of Professor JRR Tolkien, especially ***The Hobbit*** *and* ***The Lord of the Rings.*** *The society started as a small localised group but has since grown*

JRR Tolkien. Courtesy Allen & Unwin Ltd

to such an extent that a large journal, ***Mallorn,*** *was created to replace its original publication* ***Belladonna's Broadsheet. Mallorn*** *carries articles on Middle-Earth heraldry, genealogy, language, Tolkien and his critics, and also poetry, news, book reviews and letters. A six-weekly bulletin keeps members in touch with one another throughout Australia, Canada, the USA, Belgium and Eire as well as Britain, and a library allows members to borrow books and magazines free of charge. Those interested in joining may obtain details from Mrs Vera Chapman, The Secretary, 21 Harrington House, Stanhope Street, London NW1. Membership subscription costs £1.50(*$5 *US) and should be paid to Archie Mercer, The Treasurer, 21 Trenethick Parc, Helston, Cornwall.*

UNITED ARTISTS FILMS have released a new slapstick comedy type picture called *Sleeper*. Woody Allen and Diane Keaton star in what promises to be a hilarious skit on the sf theme. Woody plays a Rip Van Winkle figure who falls asleep and wakes up 200 years in the future. He has to dress up as a robot, take part in a futuristic beauty contest and participate in life on a farm which grows giant vegetables. Recommended for those who like their sf to be funny and don't take life too seriously.

Woody Allen in an accidentally over-inflated Hydro-Vac Suit in* Sleeper, *a United Artists Release

IN SFM 1 we advised people interested in joining the British Science Fiction Association to write to Keith Freeman. We should have directed you all instead to David Tillston who is Membership Secretary for the Association. Any future enquiries to go to David, please, at 215 Egerton, Tanhouse 1/2, Skelmersdale, Lancs WN8 6AB. Our apologies to Keith Freeman; we hope that he has not been completely buried under an avalanche of unsolicited mail!

DAVE TAYLOR has brought out a new fanzine, ***Nebula,*** *which contains trading lists of paperbacks and comics, and includes short stories, reviews, letters, articles and artwork. The main purpose of the 'zine is to provide wanted / for sale information for sf book collectors, but Dave says it will have 'the broadest reference'.* ***Nebula*** *is non-profit-making, and subscribers need only send a large stamped addressed envelope to Dave Taylor, 15 Alwyn Gardens, Upton-by-Chester, Chester, to receive a regular copy. Contributions are also welcomed, either as open letters or articles.*

BOOKS

Yesterday's Children by David Gerrold. Published by Faber, £2.40. Brandt, captain of an outdated starship, is involved in an inter-galactic battle. He is as old and tired as his ship, and has learnt long ago that discretion is often the better part of valour. His first officer, Korie – young, keen, ruthless, ambitious – gradually assumes power as the ship seeks from warp to interspace and back for their quarry. The crew is near to mutiny and their prey, as they seem to get near to it, becomes increasingly elusive. Korie, now in all but purely nominal command, is given ten days to find and kill; and within hours of expiry of his time limit, an appalling truth dawns which precipitates a final crisis.

The Omega Point by George Zebrowski. Published by New English Library Ltd, 40p. Gorgias was one of the last surviving members of the ancient and mighty race, the Herculeans. Their rival Empire had dared to challenge Earth's supremacy of the stars. In vicious retaliation their race was nearly wiped out, and their home planet left burnt out and lifeless. These old and terrible memories were etched deep in Gorgias' memory. They drove him on over the lonely and hate-filled centuries, seeking a vengeance that would bring eternal glory. But the lovely Myraa, beloved from long ago; had a strange and different vision. A vision that did not include empires and wars and armies. And she constantly called him, drawing him always back to her side ....

Uninvited Visitors – A Biologist Looks at UFOs by Ivan T Sanderson. Published by Tandem, 40p. Ivan Sanderson takes his readers on an intellectual journey based on his own extensive research into the realm of unexplained phenomena. His findings and theories may shock or anger you but no thinking person can afford to ignore them. What could UFOs be? Where do they come from? How do they get here? What is their purpose? Mr Sanderson attempts to collate the evidence and answer some of these questions.

A Pocketful of Stars edited by Damon Knight. Published by Pan, 50p. An anthology of sf stories from the archives of the Milford Writers Conference, by Harlan Ellison, Keith Laumer, Fritz Leiber, Gordon Dickson, Damon Knight and others. Nineteen stories in all.

Invisible Residents by Ivan T Sanderson. Published by Tandem, 40p. A disquisition on certain matters maritime and the possibility of intelligent life existing under the waters of this earth. 75% of this planet lies under water. Can anyone afford to ignore the possibility that something might be happening in the oceans, rivers, seas and lakes of the world? Ivan Sanderson presents evidence of recent reports, historical documents and ancient objects to support his theory about underwater beings, and the possibility of air-to-water craft existing for their means of travel.

The Oceans of Venus by Isaac Asimov. Published by New English Library Ltd, 35p. Number four in NEL's Space Ranger series. Disaster threatens the undersea civilization of the colonising earthmen. Far below the boundless seas of the planet Venus a strange battle for survival is fought. David 'Lucky' Starr arrives on Venus to combat the evil and insidious force which is preying on men's minds. To his horror, the only enemy he can find is inside his own head.

Seeds of Stars & *Thunder of Stars* by Darren Morgan & John Kippax. Published by Pan, 40p each. The first two of a new series about a starship named *Venturer 12*.

The Same to You Doubled by Robert Sheckley. Published by Pan, 35p. A collection of sixteen tales by Robert Sheckley, in which the rules of logic are thrown to the wind. A bizarre and mind-stretching group with titles like *The Resourceful Vacuum Cleaner*.

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BEST SF STORIES FROM NEW WORLDS 8
Painting by Jim Burns of Young Artists
(Courtesy Panther Books Ltd.)

SCIENCEFICTION
NEW ENGLISH LIBRARY MONTHLY

the Artist in Science Fiction

By Aune R Butt

Jones, Edward 'Eddie' John. Born: 18 January 1935. Educated: Bootle Grammar School. Self-taught sf artist; work includes covers for Larry Niven's Neutron Star *(Sphere Books), George Zebrowski's* Omega Point *(Bastei Verlag, Germany), Piers Anthony's* Macroscope *(Sphere Books),* The Chariots of Ra *(Terra Astra, Germany), Roger Zelazny's* Damnation Alley *(Sphere Books) and* Beyond This Horizon *symposium catalogue (November 1973, Sunderland Arts Centre).*

Eddie Jones

Eddie Jones is one of today's most prolific and popular sf artists, with hundreds of covers and illustrations to his credit. His work is published not only in Britain but also in Germany and America, a considerable achievement for a self-taught artist. Jones' interest in sf stretches back to his schooldays, when he was an avid reader of such magazines as *Amazing*, *Fantastic* and *Planet Stories*. Although he was initially interested in their story content, it was not long before he became attracted by their illustrations and began to draw himself, contributing occasional work to fanzines.

After leaving Bootle Grammar School, he worked in an advertising agency in Liverpool, first as a print buyer and then as production manager. While this left little time for painting it was, he maintains, a useful background for commercial illustrations he was to produce in later years:

'It was a good grounding for me. Now I paint with printing techniques in mind, and I can tailor my pictures to publishers' requirements.'

Jones' illustrations were first accepted by magazines like *Nebula* and *New Worlds* in 1958, when he was twenty-three, but it was not until 1969, when he was offered the position of art editor with *Vision of Tomorrow*, that he was able to give up his job and concentrate full-time on developing his art.

The results can be seen today in his wide use of different techniques. Although working mainly in gouache, he also uses acrylic, water-colours and sometimes an air-brush. Usually he works straight onto a plain white board. 'The painting is in my head. It just goes straight down,' he says. Only occasionally does he sketch a detail on paper first. His wife, Marsha, who is a literary agent, reads the stories and books for him and extracts the illustratable parts. She herself has some art training and maintains that she can visualise a picture but falls down when it comes to execution. Certainly she saves him much of the hard slog of reading through all the work he has to illustrate.

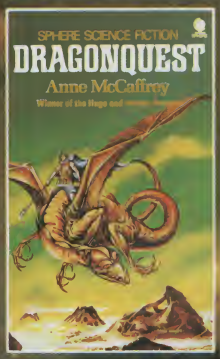
Jones believes that while the quality of science fiction writing is retreating, the art-work is improving all the time. He himself collects original illustrations by other sf artists, an Ed Emshwiller painting being a particularly valued possession. He finds himself being influenced by many of the top American sf artists like John Schoenherr and Jack Gaughan, and also by Britain's Chris Foss whose work he admires greatly. 'Living sf as I do means that I am bound to be influenced

Cover for The Hugo Winners 1963-1967 *published by Sphere Books*

Cover for The Hugo Winners 1968-1970 *published by Sphere Books*

all the time. In sum, making no secret of the fact that he writes according to what he feels the public wants, he is not particularly interested in the subject in hand. He also draws a distinction very clearly between science fiction and fantasy fiction: "I am a fiction writer and I rely on my imagination" he affirms. Even if authors like Jules Verne have influenced him at all.

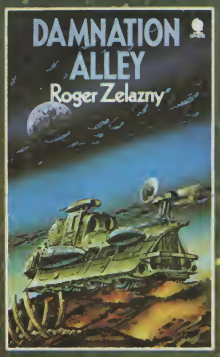
Today, much of Jones' work is published in Germany. "British enthusiasts are great but there he asserts. "Because of the overall quality of German art & style



Cover for Dragonquest reproduced by kind permission of Sphere Books

monthly library. Every publication includes contributions from Jones, who designs the cover and inside illustrations. And covers for Science Fiction Times, Perry Rhodan and Vampir Horror Roman, Utopia Classics, Terra Sonder-Edition, Terra Extra, Terra Taschenbuch and Kelter Verlag all bear the unmistakable Jones hallmark.

In addition to his work in Britain featured mainly by Sphere Books, multi-author books being *The Hugo Winners 1963 1967* edited by Isaac Asimov, *Dragonquest* by Anne McCaffrey and *Damnation Alley* by Roger Zelazny, all of which show his versatility and the range of his imagination.



Cover for Damnation Alley reproduced by kind permission of Sphere Books

These days he is literally snowed under with work. He averages about a dozen sf paperback covers a month, and has to concentrate solely on these.

For enjoyment he reads sword-and-sorcery novels by Robert E Howard's Conan stories and those by Poul Anderson being his favourites. He also enjoys Tarzan and Western films and has a special fondness for Japanese Samurai films.

A Hobbit for Tomorrow

Conversation is perhaps the best place to view original illustrations by Sidney Jones. He arranges an original piece of his work at all of the Conventions.

As a person who has been involved in sf all his life Eddie should have the last word on it. "I really am not very articulate," he says, an idea that he cannot seem to follow through on his paintings.

VISION

OF TOMORROW

SEPTEMBER 5/-

Cassandra's Castle

Lee Harding

AN ECHO OF THE PAST

FIFTY YEARS OF SF MAGAZINES

PART FOUR

1956-1974

BY MICHAEL ASHLEY

I – THE CONTENDERS

At the start of 1956 twenty science fiction magazines were still in existence, fifteen of these in America. The leading title was ASTOUNDING, capably edited by John W Campbell and now over 300 issues old. Its immediate rivals were GALAXY, edited by Horace L Gold, and THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION (F&SF).

GALAXY had first appeared in 1950 at the start of the digest boom. It presented good stories by ASTOUNDING's big names, notably Simak, Heinlein, Asimov and Sturgeon, as well as introducing new authors like Robert Sheckley and Alan Nourse and revitalising others like Damon Knight, Frederik Pohl and Cyril Kornbluth.

Although GALAXY and ASTOUNDING used many of the same contributors and carried similar departments (book reviews, science columns), they each differed in their fictional policy. ASTOUNDING strove for scientific logic wherever possible; all its stories had a background extrapolated logically from historical trends but never carried beyond the bounds of plausibility. The GALAXY story, on the other hand, while generally possessed of an equally well worked out background, was nearly always carried beyond the plausible stage. This is not necessarily an adverse criticism; when one considers that many authors wrote for both magazines it shows that such a market as GALAXY was not only worthwhile but necessary.

F&SF was totally different. As the title implies it published as much fantasy as sf. Until August 1954, the magazine had been edited jointly by Anthony Boucher and J Francis McComas. Boucher then continued single-handed up till August 1958, when it was handed over to Robert P Mills.

These three magazines were head and shoulders above the rest. A secondary layer included the magazine edited by Robert Lowndes and Larry Shaw. Lowndes had succeeded Charles Hornig as editor of FUTURE FICTION in 1941, and two years later also took over SCIENCE FICTION. Suspended during the war, these titles were revived in the boom years and by 1956 were settling down to a regular schedule, together with SCIENCE FICTION QUARTERLY, the last surviving pulp. SCIENCE FICTION was prefixed *Original* to identify it with the Hornig days. Regular contributors included L Sprague de Camp and Gordon Dickson, plus the fiction factory of Robert Silverberg and Randall Garrett, who under their own names and pen names like Robert Randall and Calvin Knox kept the issues full of reasonably good stories.

Larry Shaw had started INFINITY with a bang in 1956, its first issue carrying Arthur Clarke's Hugo-winning *The Star*. Here too would appear Messrs Silverberg and Garrett, plus Harlan Ellison and Henry Slesar. Many English authors made its pages, notably Brian Aldiss with *But Who Can Replace a Man?* Unfortunately circumstances resulted in the magazine's death in November 1958, mostly through distribution problems, a major bane of sf magazines.

Late in 1956, a sister magazine appeared, SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURES. This had been the name of a popular publication of Lester Del Rey's some three years before, and fans assumed Shaw was reviving it as the first issue was numbered Volume 1, Number 6 (even though this was mystifying since Del Rey's last issue was Volume 2, Number 3). The matter was solved with the second issue numbered simply Volume 1, Number 2. The

purpose of SF ADVENTURES was to publish complete novels, whereas INFINITY presented the shorter pieces. The first issue carried *The Starcombers* by Edmond Hamilton, now in his thirtieth year of sf writing. But the bulk of the writings came again from those conveyor belts, Silverberg, Garrett and Ellison.

1957 was a boom year for these authors with 101 sf stories under their own names plus twenty-one under known pen names like Knox, Robert Randall, David Gordon and Ellis Hart. We may never know what other stories appeared under house pseudonyms like Ivar Jorgenson, Alexander Blade and S M Tenneshaw.

Mind you, 1957 was an ideal year for such a boom. It had all the makings of an echo of 1953. The close of 1956 saw not only the birth of SF ADVENTURES, but a new magazine, SATELLITE SF, from publisher Leo Margulies and SUPER-SCIENCE FICTION, edited by WW Scott, from Headline Publications. SUPER-SCIENCE FICTION was not unlike Lowndes' magazines in appearance and content, the fiction factory supplying much of the material, and most likely many of Lowndes' rejects. It could, however, boast excellent covers by Kelly Freas *and* Ed Emshwiller.

SATELLITE SF was something different. Until August 1956 Leo Margulies had been editor-publisher of FANTASTIC UNIVERSE. The magazine was then handed to HL Herbert, and Hans Stefan Santesson (editor of the SAINT MYSTERY MAGAZINE) took over the editorship. FANTASTIC UNIVERSE was a consistently good magazine and continued to publish worthy material, Santesson picking the best of the fiction factory, plus quality stories from A Bertram Chandler, Clifford Simak and Harry Harrison.

Leo Margulies teamed up for the third time with Sam Merwin, and the first SATELLITE appeared in October 1956. The policy was for a good, strong lead novel, plus short stories for padding. The first issue carried *The Man From Earth* by Algis Budrys, the second ran Philip Dick's *A Glass of Darkness* – and these *were* long, not the 15,000 worders of SF ADVENTURES. Dick's novel was over 40,000 words, and so was the lead novel in the third issue which brought together the talents of Hal Clement and Sam Merwin in *The Planet For Plunder*. Fans were not brief in their adulation either. As history is wont to repeat itself, Merwin only edited the first two issues and then Margulies assumed control.

The only other competent magazine at this time was IF. James Quinn, the editor until August 1958, had a fairly regular stable of authors, including Edward Ludwig, John Jakes, Irving Cox and Bryce Walton. Stories were of a high standard but never outstanding. But the magazine enjoyed relative success, although its heyday was yet to come.

IF's editor, Paul Fairman, had left after a few issues to become Associate Editor at AMAZING STORIES and FANTASTIC. Since the editor, Howard Browne, was a self-confessed mystery rather than sf fan, Fairman tended to take over the magazine. When it went digest-sized in August 1953 Fairman became Managing Editor and from then on the magazine began to sink to an all-time low. In the Palmer days AMAZING's fiction had not been of particularly high quality but it had been entertaining. Few of these qualities remained in the stories churned out by Fairman's team of authors for a predetermined wordage per issue. Fiction ranged from medium to pure crud. Here Silverberg, Garrett and Ellison had guaranteed sales, and they will be the first to admit that these were not their best output. Other authors included Henry Slesar, Milton Lesser and Fairman himself, and much appeared under the house pseudonyms of Alexander Blade, Gerald Vance, SM Tenneshaw and PF Costello. FANTASTIC was no less guilty of this and it is baffling how the magazines survived. The only highlight was the April 1956 AMAZING special issue to celebrate its thirtieth birthday. It was entirely reprint but revived several good stories from AMAZING's archives, plus an interesting article by Sam Moskowitz on sf predictions in AMAZING's formative years, and a whole clutch of famous names contributed to *Predictions: 2001 AD*, including Salvador Dali and Philip Wylie. Fairman took full control in September 1956.

The remaining magazines were a mere hair's-breadth ahead of Fairman in quality. These were edited by ex-Ziff Davis people William Hamling and Ray Palmer. Palmer had left in 1949 to begin FATE, a magazine devoted to the occult, but he did not desert sf, and began OTHER WORLDS SCIENCE STORIES which might well have become a new voice of Shaverism had it not been that Palmer put a young female fan, Beatrice Mahaffey, in charge of it. After several title changes it reverted to OTHER WORLDS in May 1955, but by then Palmer's fanaticism towards the bizarre was taking its toll. Bea Mahaffey left in November 1955, and with Palmer in full control there seemed no hope. A companion magazine MYSTIC, which had carried some reasonable fiction, changed its name to SEARCH in October 1956 and became non-fiction occult similar to FATE. Palmer had immediately latched on to the flying saucer phenomenon of the early 1950s, and he now produced a magazine called FLYING SAUCERS *from Other Worlds*. At the same time he retitled OTHER WORLDS, *Flying Saucers from*

OTHER WORLDS, by which he hoped to bluff his distributors into thinking they were handling one title instead of two. Fiction quality deteriorated despite contributors like Jack Vance, and what's more it reverted to pulp format. After the September 1957 issue it became simply FLYING SAUCERS and carried mostly non-fiction. Thereby Ray Palmer made his dubious exit from the science fiction field.

William Hamling was in the meantime editing IMAGINATION and IMAGINATIVE TALES. Fiction here was of better quality, particularly that by Edmond Hamilton and Daniel Galouye. Hamling had established his own Greenleaf Company to publish the magazines and towards the end of the 1950s he entered the men's magazines field. Hugh Heffner had made headway in 1953 with PLAYBOY, which by the late 1950s was regularly printing sf, ably edited by Ray Russell. Hamling entered the field with ROGUE, at one time edited by Harlan Ellison. ROGUE was more of a money spinner than the sf titles, and gradually they faded away. IMAGINATION with its October 1958 issue, and IMAGINATIVE TALES, retitled SPACE TRAVEL for its last three issues, died in November 1958.

Britain was doing no better. February 1956 saw the suspension of the BRITISH SPACE FICTION MAGAZINE of Vargo Statten (John Russell Fearn). That same month EC Tubb took over the editorship of AUTHENTIC, a high quality magazine which people have claimed was superior to NEW WORLDS. Certainly it printed good fiction by the same team of writers such as Kenneth Bulmer, Philip High, Bertram Chandler and Tubb himself. AUTHENTIC's main fault lay in its none too exceptional cover art, mostly the work of John Mortimer and EL Blandford. Flat, inexpressive covers meant the magazine could easily be overlooked. Contents-wise Tubb certainly injected vitality into the magazine, and it was going from strength to strength when its publishers folded the title in October 1957 and went into paperbacks in a big way.

Apart from Carnell's magazines that left just the Scottish NEBULA, maintained single-handed by Peter Hamilton. The fiction was not always the best, but considering the small budget on which it operated the magazine did remarkably well. In 1958 Hamilton managed to produce twelve monthly issues, but trouble set in again in 1959, and after forty-one issues it died. A forty-second issue was prepared but never distributed.

Shortly after its demise, the publishers Gerald Swan reappeared in the field with SCIENCE FICTION LIBRARY, a grotesque little magazine reprinting almost entire issues of FUTURE and SCIENCE FICTION from the early 1940s. It lasted three issues.

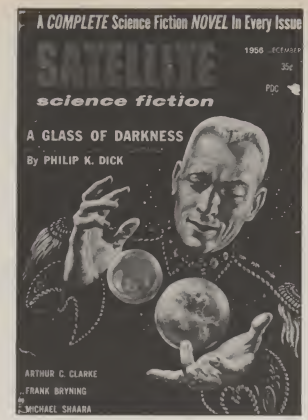
The only surviving publications were Carnell's monthly NEW WORLDS and bi-monthly SCIENCE FANTASY. In addition negotiations were underway with Irwin Stein to produce a British edition of SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURES. The first appeared in March 1958 carrying reprints from various US editions. It met with success, so when the American counterpart folded in June 1958, John Carnell took full control, and from January 1959 it featured all new British material with the same policy of full length novels each issue.

II – INTO THE SIXTIES

1958-59 saw a blight settle on science fiction, with the survivors of the 1953 boom now finding it hard going. New publications were the first to suffer. SUPER-SCIENCE FICTION, after only eighteen issues, folded in October 1959. SATELLITE lasted for the same number of issues but experimented early in 1959 by going large 'bedsheet' or flat-size (8 x 11 inches), and turning monthly. In his editorial Margulies stated it was a publishing innovation for which they had strived for several months. It was not new. The ill-fated SCIENCE FICTION PLUS had used the same format in 1953, and that had not outlived the year. SATELLITE was suitably impressive, but it died with its May 1959 issue, although a June issue was printed but not distributed.

All the good publications were dying. First INFINITY, now SATELLITE. A plague swept the field. Lowndes' magazines fell one by one. SCIENCE FICTION QUARTERLY, the last true pulp in February 1958; FUTURE in April 1960, and SCIENCE FICTION STORIES in May 1960. Even FANTASTIC UNIVERSE, which in October 1959 had experimented by reverting to pulp size, began to founder, and by March 1960 had died. Its publisher, Henry Scharf, had already arranged with John Carnell to produce an American edition of NEW WORLDS, with Hans Santesson as editor. This first appeared in March 1960, but died two issues later. So too did a companion title FEAR.

If the established magazines were dying what chance had new titles? Yet they appeared. Republic Features Syndicate brought out TALES OF THE FRIGHTENED, a magazine named after a local New York radio horror programme. It was edited by Lyle Kenyon Engel, and had a companion magazine, SPACE SF. Neither title survived more than two



issues despite big-name contributors.

A little earlier Ziff-Davis had introduced a third title DREAM WORLD, with Fairman in charge. There was rumour that DREAM WORLD would supplant FANTASTIC, but it died after three forgettable issues.

F&SF turned a hand to a companion magazine in 1957. Now that *was* news. VENTURE SF appeared in January with Robert Mills in charge. Like SATELLITE, the intention was for a lead novel plus shorts. The first issue carried Poul Anderson's *Virgin Planet*, but as issues progressed the tendency moved towards shorter pieces. VENTURE was approved by sf fans but it could not survive the sf blight. After ten issues (July 1958) it died, and the title was incorporated with F&SF.

March 1957 saw the emergence of SATURN. Subtitled *The Magazine of Science Fiction* it incorporated *Fantasy* into the title of its May issue. Publisher and editor was Robert Sproul, and Donald Wollheim was credited as Editorial Consultant. Even so SATURN was not an impressive magazine. Its first issue resurrected a little known, best forgotten Jules Verne work, *Eternal Adam*. Its second issue saw Damon Knight, Cordwainer Smith and HP Lovecraft, but somehow it was not quite right. Fortunately Sproul saw the light and after five issues changed the policy, making it a detective / mystery publication in 1958.

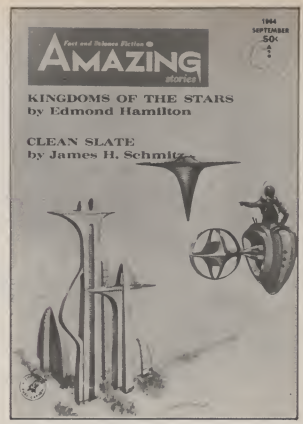
1958 saw two one-shot publications: STAR SF and VANGUARD. VANGUARD (June) was edited by James Blish and carried five stories by Bertram Chandler, Cyril Kornbluth, James Gunn and others, all good fiction. But that was all we ever saw of VANGUARD, and I wonder how many people took up its offer of a life subscription for $25? STAR SF (January) was an attempt by Ballantine Books to convert their sucessful *Star* anthology series into magazine format. The STAR series had been the first regular publication of all-new sf anthologies, later taken up by John Carnell in NEW WRITINGS and Damon Knight in ORBIT. Frederik Pohl had capably edited these, and he again came up with a winner in this issue. Stories by Brian Aldiss (*Judas Dancing*) and Isaac Asimov (*S as in Zebatinsky*) are particularly remembered. But alas, we saw no more of STAR.

One can only conjecture why such a blight descended on the magazines. Certainly the mushrooming of paperback books was a contributory element, and I wonder whether the glut of so called sf-monster films of the 1950s was now taking its toll. People temporarily converted to sf discovered that it just was not like that, and finding true sf too adult for them turned to other forms.

Whatever it was, the axe came down. By the close of 1960 just nine titles remained, six in America and three in Britain. This was the lowest figure for fifteen years!

III – TACTICS

Several important changes occurred at the end of the decade that would radically alter sf magazines in America. First was the departure of Paul Fairman from the editorship of the two Ziff-Davis magazines. In December 1958 Cele Goldsmith took charge. She had started out at Ziff-Davis as a secretary, but from September 1956 had been classed as assistant editor. Her verve for the magazine far exceeded Fairman's mundane attitude, and this soon showed. For instance the November 1959 FANTASTIC was devoted to Fritz Leiber, with five of his stories including the revival of 'Grey Mouser'. Excluding the notorious 'Shaver' issue of AMAZING in June 1947, this was the first time a magazine

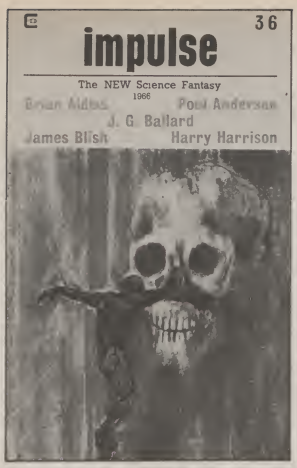


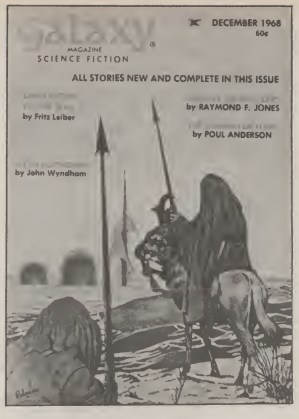
was devoted to a single author.

The second change was at IF. Foundering in the sf blight, Quinn had handed the editor's chair to Damon Knight in the hope he would add the necessary life. But after the February 1959 issue Quinn sold the title to the publishers of GALAXY, and from the July issue Horace Gold was in charge. Gold made immediate changes to convert IF to a true companion to GALAXY. GALAXY had changed schedule in 1959 to bi-monthly, but at the same time boosting its page count from 144 to 192 to make it *the* biggest sf magazine of its day. IF now appeared alternately with GALAXY and carried the same troupe of reliable authors.

The third change was something else. During late 1959 and 1960 John Campbell had been undertoning the ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION logotype of his magazine with the ghost title ANALOG. In February 1960 the sub-title became *Science Fact and Fiction*, and then in October 1960 ANALOG *Science Fact & Fiction*. The title change came because, as Campbell reported: 'Science fiction is, very strictly and literally, *analogous* to science facts. It is a convenient analog system for thinking about new scientific, social, and economic ideas – and for re-examining old ideas.' (1) Not everyone approved of the name change. Old-time fans like Alva Rogers regarded it as a passing of an era, and brought out an entire book devoted to the old magazine, entitled: *A Requiem For Astounding*.

The sixties have rightly been called the 'New Wave' years. This was chiefly spearheaded in Britain, but one must not forget that several American authors associated with the New Wave were appearing before the British change came. The foremost authors were Roger Zelazny, Thomas Disch, Ursula LeGuin and Norman Spinrad. (Samuel Delany appeared initially in book form). The credit for the discovery of the first three must go to Cele Goldsmith. They all debuted within months of each other in FANTASTIC. Whilst Ursula LeGuin showed tremendous confidence in her writings, Zelazny and Disch were more experimental, and





their work became even more way out under their respective pseudonyms of Harrison Denmark and Dobbin Thorpe. A further author whose experimental writings found a steady home with Miss Goldsmith was David Bunch. Spinrad on the other hand debuted the following year (1963) in ANALOG.

By 1963 the New Wave was showing signs in Britain. The flag-bearer was Michael Moorcock who had appeared with some remarkably innovative stories in NEW WORLDS, besides his praiseworthy *Elric* series in SCIENCE FANTASY. The chance for Moorcock to do more than just write came in 1964.

Nova Publications was feeling the pinch of decreased sales. First SF ADVENTURES folded (May 1963) after thirty-two issues. By October it was obvious Nova could no longer survive. The two titles were sold to Roberts and Vintner, and thereupon John Carnell fractured his relationship with the magazines and began his successful series of NEW WRITINGS IN SF, which he continued till his death in 1972. The last Nova NEW WORLDS appeared in April 1964, and the letter column carried these words from Moorcock: '. . . sf often claims to be far-out when, in fact, it rarely is. It *should* be far-out – it needs editors who are willing to take a risk on a story and run it even though this may bring criticism on their heads.' (2)

Moorcock was unaware at that time of writing that he would soon put those thoughts into action. The 142nd issue of NEW WORLDS, dated May-June 1964, appeared with Moorcock as editor. It was no longer digest size. The sign of the times had resulted in the magazine appearing in pocketbook format, which was readily accepted by the public, and the sales soon increased. Moorcock's figurehead was JG Ballard who soon became the voice of NEW WORLDS, but other authors, notably Charles Platt and Langdon Jones, were as much a part of the trendsetting.

SCIENCE FANTASY came under the guiding hand of thirty-five year old Oxford art-dealer Kyril Bonfiglioli. An odd-ball in the sf genre, he seemed to go out of his way to provoke hostilities with the readership over such questions as letter columns and artwork. But it had to be admitted that the magazine published some excellent fiction, often better than NEW WORLDS. The magazine's main discovery was Keith Roberts who initially appeared with his stories about a young witch, Anita, and then tackled a catastrophe novel, *The Furies*. A competent artist, Roberts was responsible for most of the magazine's covers. At the start of 1965 SCIENCE FANTASY became monthly for the first time in its history, and for a while the British sf scene looked healthy.

Meanwhile in America sf was anything but dormant. John Campbell was not happy with a digest-sized ANALOG. For one thing it was easily lost on newsstands behind the larger-sized men's magazines. When, after over a hundred years, Street & Smith was taken over by Condé Nast Publications, Campbell acted. March 1963 saw the first large-size ANALOG, with an emphasis on advertising. But Campbell would soon report: 'Condé Nast has found that it simply isn't time for an advertising-supported science fiction magazine . . . The larger size is too expensive to be reader-supported; to be successful, it also must be advertiser supported. It wasn't.' (3)

So with the April 1965 issue ANALOG was again digest. But Campbell did not need to fear. ANALOG's sales continued to rise, and one main reason was its publication of Frank Herbert's colossal novels about Dune. *Dune World* had been serialized in three issues starting December 1963. The sequel, *Prophet of Dune* began in January 1965 and passed over into the digest-sized issues. Later published in book form as *Dune*, Herbert's world has become something of a cult. Who said things weren't happening in sf?

Once again new magazines appeared: two in April 1963 on opposite coasts of the USA. In California, Charles Fritch published GAMMA, *New Frontiers in Fiction*. In format and style it owed much to F&SF, carrying both new and reprint stories and an interview section. Associated with the undertaking were William Nolan and Jack Matcha who were primarily mystery writers, and it was not long before a companion detective magazine CHASE appeared. GAMMA itself had to struggle for existence. A second issue appeared in late 1963, and only one in 1964. GAMMA 4, a special 'Outer Space' issue came in February 1965, but a fifth issue in September was the last. A great loss, since GAMMA was a well balanced, competent magazine. Perhaps its too great similarity to F&SF was one reason for its demise, but one feels that it was more likely the failure of distributors to give the magazine the necessary promotion.

GAMMA's birth-twin on the East Coast was WORLDS OF TOMORROW. Horace Gold had vacated the editorial chair in October 1961 in favour of Frederik Pohl, who had been Feature Editor of IF since its purchase in 1959. Pohl was a great experimenter. He began to build up IF as a worthy rival, and whilst GALAXY still published hard-core sf in rivalry to ANALOG, IF would take the more way-out material, Many of IF's stories were out and out fantasy, and one was reminded of the mature days of PLANET STORIES.

To blend the two Pohl brought out WORLDS OF TOMORROW. Its first issue came with a bang: a new novel by Arthur Clarke, his much overlooked *People of the Sea*, and a novelette from Murray Leinster, now 67 but still competing with the best of them. In general WORLDS OF TOMORROW carried longer features than its two sisters, and yet surprisingly it never became as popular. It was often reputed to print rejects from those magazines, but nevertheless was of good quality and showed the inimitable mark of editor Pohl.

In passing, mention should be made of the editorial changes at F&SF. Robert Mills remained in charge until March 1962 when Avram Davidson accepted the challenge. Davidson has always had a penchant for a light-hearted approach to sf and fantasy, and consequently one finds his issues were often quite frivolous so that even though the magazine published Heinlein's *Glory Road* and Zelazny's *A Rose For Ecclesiastes* in this period, such masterpieces rubbed shoulders with oddities like Don White's *Peggy and Peter Go To The Moon*. Nevertheless, it was Davidson who instituted the F&SF special issues with one devoted to Ray Bradbury (May 1963), which has long since become a collector's item.

Davidson quit F&SF in November 1964 to concentrate on writing. His position was temporarily filled by publisher Joseph Ferman, and then from January 1966 by Edward Ferman. The assistant editor from November 1963 had been Ted White.

At this time the title of F&SF's defunct companion VENTURE had been resurrected in Britain by Atlas Publishing Company to reprint material from both VENTURE and F&SF. It lasted from September 1963 to December 1965 when Atlas finally folded.

Meanwhile AMAZING and FANTASTIC were gradually losing sales despite Cele Goldsmith's ability. (By 1964 Miss Goldsmith had married and the name on the masthead was now Cele Lalli). The time came when the sales went too low and Ziff-Davis, the publishers for twenty-seven years, no longer wanted them. They were saved from extinction by Sol Cohen, who had been publishing GALAXY. Cohen put Joseph Ross in charge of editing to get the titles back to solvency. The key rested in the fact that Ziff-Davis had bought reprint rights to much of their material. Consequently, once the new material was used up, Ross filled the magazine almost totally with reprints. Initially this was a good idea. Forty years had meant that AMAZING had had ample time to publish good material, and these early issues of AMAZING and FANTASTIC, with their beautifully reproduced old back covers of 1940s issues, were good buys. But the good reprints were rapidly used up, not just be the two main titles but by the fleet of all-reprint magazines that Cohen began to create. First in January 1966 came GREAT SF. That Summer saw THE MOST THRILLING SF EVER TOLD. 1967 saw STRANGE FANTASY and SPACE ADVENTURES. These reached a peak in 1970, when some fourteen different reprint magazines, including a clutch of YEARBOOKs, flourished.

The trouble was that Cohen exercised the right of reprint to these stories and felt no obligation to pay reprint fees to the authors. Naturally this angered Damon Knight who had recently formed a union, the Science Fiction Writers of America. It reached the state whereby the magazines were virtually boycotted. (Strange how twenty years earlier similar boycotts had been advocated over the Shaver mystery. Once again history repeats itself!)

Nevertheless the magazines' sales increased, and they were saved from imminent doom. The job done, Joseph Ross handed over the reins to Harry Harrison. But here we jump the gun slightly.

IV – SF UNDERGROUND

I do not intend to go into a for-or-against on Moorcock's New Wave NEW WORLDS. It certainly attracted interest and brought new life to the genre. But by 1966 events were telling. Roberts & Vintner suffered a financial setback and could no longer continue. This was a devastating blow, particularly to SCIENCE FANTASY. Kyril Bonfiglioli had sculptured a fine magazine, and at the start of 1966 added the final touch. Deciding the title no longer reflected the contents (a hint of Campbellism), he killed off SCIENCE FANTASY, and in March 1966 was born IMPULSE. Its first issue included new material by Poul Anderson, JG Ballard, Brian Aldiss and James Blish on the theme of sacrifice. A promising start that it maintained. Talk that IMPULSE still gave the wrong impression as a name for a sf magazine brought about the hybrid 'sf IMPULSE'. By that time Bonfiglioli, satisfied that he had done his work well, retired to his art business, and Keith Roberts assumed control. It appears JG Ballard was offered the job, but ultimately Harry Harrison became Editor-in-Chief in October 1966. It was just then that Roberts & Vintner found themselves sinking. After twelve issues IMPULSE was incorporated with NEW WORLDS (February 1967), and there went the last signs of sanity in British sf.

With the assistance of an Arts Council Grant the first re-styled NEW WORLDS appeared in July 1967. Large-size, the first issue, designed by Charles Platt, was most impressive. An illusionistic cover by MC Escher, and names like Disch, Zelazny, Ballard and Aldiss attracted many. The Disch story was the first episode of his novel, *Camp Concentra-*

tion, complete with four-letter words. One serial later began *Bug Jack Barron* by Norman Spinrad. This was too controversial for some tastes and before long NEW WORLDS was again in trouble. Starting with Issue 180 (March 1968), WH Smith's refused to handle it, and this hit it badly. With Moorcock in nebulous control, a variety of people were acting as editors, amongst them James Sallis, Charles Platt, Langdon Jones, Graham Hall, Douglas Hill and Graham Charnock. The price increased to 5/-. Certain very good issues appeared, such as the November 1968 'all new writers' issue.

From the next issue NEW WORLDS began to slip. Moorcock brought back his Jerry Cornelius stories to its pages. They had been born here in 1965 and had since become something of a cult in the underground paper INTERNATIONAL TIMES. NEW WORLDS itself now became more and more an underground publication. Its page count dwindled, although its dimensions grew. Moorcock and Platt left the magazine but returned. By June 1969 even Brian Aldiss was numbered amongst the cluster of authors turning out Jerry Cornelius stories. No one was surprised when Charles Platt declared in his editorial to the August 1969 issue: 'NEW WORLDS is not a science fiction magazine'. (4)

And there we lay NEW WORLDS to rest. Eight issues later it was dead, but by then Britain had a new sf magazine.

A quixotic attempt at a new magazine had been made in 1966 when Mancunian fans Charles Partington and Harry Nadler had tried to convert their amateur magazine ALIEN WORLDS into a professional one. A single issue appeared in the Summer. Although profusely illustrated with full colour artwork and material by Ken Bulmer and Harry Harrison, it was nevertheless still-born.

In 1969 Newcastle fan Philip Harbottle was contacted by Australian enthusiast Ronald Graham with a view to publishing some of the work of John Russell Fearn, an author Harbottle ardently admired. Graham further suggested a new sf magazine, with all new sf from British and Australian authors. Philip Harbottle became the editor and the first issue appeared in August 1969. VISION OF TOMORROW was large size and carried a variety of fiction and articles, plus full colour covers and the occasional colour interior. It was well received and negotiations were underway for a companion sf magazine plus a new SWORD & SORCERY publication, but Graham pulled out of the concern at the last minute, and after twelve issues VISION OF TOMORROW folded, (September 1970). For the first time since 1945 Britain was without a science fiction magazine.

Now four years later, we have SCIENCE FICTION MONTHLY, Britain's sole voice in the field. Let us hope it is not as fated as its predecessors.

V – AMERICA TODAY

In the mid-sixties occasional sf magazines would be found bobbing above the waves, only to drown almost immediately. One such was BIZARRE MYSTERY, edited by John Poe from New Hampshire. It was a companion magazine to INTRIGUE, which published spy stories, cashing in on the *Man From UNCLE* craze. (That series also had its own magazine). BIZARRE attracted some big names: Thomas Disch, Avram Davidson, Arthur Porges, plus reprints of HP Lovecraft and Cornell Woolrich. The second issue presented a short version of Pierre Boulle's *Planet of the Apes*. But it was shortlived. The third issue in January 1966 was its last.

Since Robert Lowndes had left Columbia Magazines he had been editing EXPLORING THE UNKNOWN for Health Knowledge Inc, a non-fiction occult magazine not unlike FATE. Lowndes was not as fanatical as Palmer, and EXPLORING THE UNKNOWN was a more rationalistic magazine. In August 1963 he had persuaded Health Knowledge to bring out MAGAZINE OF HORROR. Primarily it reprinted from WEIRD TALES and STRANGE TALES, but although Lowndes was willing to include science fiction it always produced a storm of controversy in the letter column. June 1966 saw the birth of STARTLING MYSTERY STORIES, which is of interest to the sf fan for its resurrection of Murray Leinster's *Darkness* series from ARGOSY of 1929. Lowndes really got under way in November 1966 with FAMOUS SF. Here he did a great service to sf fans. His editorial policy was sticking to reprinting stories from the pre-1937 period, and in this he chose mostly from WONDER STORIES and ASTOUNDING STORIES, resurrecting several gems. New stories did occasionally appear, together with a valuable series of editorial essays on the nature of science fiction. It was a great loss when after nine issues it folded, (March 1969). Some sf stories intended for FAMOUS (by such as RA Lafferty) appeared in the surviving weird magazines. These lasted until 1971 and are now just a fond memory.

In 1966 Damon Knight brought out his first ORBIT anthology of original sf stories. The following year Harlan Ellison broke all barriers with his massive anthology DANGEROUS VISIONS. It was obvious that changes were afoot when Hugo Awards (and the newly instituted Science Fiction Writers of America's Nebula award) began to go to fiction from such anthologies. Before long the US market was deluged in them.

This was not good for the magazines. Anthologies usually paid better and reached a wider audience. WORLDS OF TOMORROW was suspended after its May 1967 issue. The circulation of all magazines bar ANALOG dropped. Sharpest was AMAZING (it dropped 20,000 in five years). When Joseph Ross handed over to Harry Harrison close followers thought that perhaps at last something might happen. It didn't. The presentation of the magazine was atrocious, and had some of the most appalling covers. Less than a year later Barry Malzberg was drafted in to help, but he lasted even less issues. Names flashed on and off AMAZING's masthead like neon signs, including Herb Lehrman, Robert Silverberg and Lawrence Janifer. And then in March 1969 came Ted White. Sol Cohen had temporarily reinstated himself as editor, but soon White took full control and the magazine improved immediately.

Fans breathed again. Whilst it was the publisher's policy to keep up the reprints, White quashed them to a minimum, and finally ousted them all together. A response came from authors and quality material flowed in, particularly from Robert Silverberg who had been writing masterful pieces for GALAXY. White also put FANTASTIC back in the fantasy field. Under Cele Lalli's reign it had fostered some fine fantasy stories, but since 1966 had been mostly sf. Now the work of Ted White, Dean Koontz, John Brunner and L Sprague de Camp brought fresh action to its pages, and even the immortal Conan was sighted there.

Ted White made a space for fandom in the magazine by reviving *The Club House* for reviewing amateur magazines. This column had disappeared from AMAZING when it had gone digest. His editorials are always interesting and lively, and even though the magazines' circulations continue to dwindle I for one hope they survive. In April 1976 AMAZING will be fifty years old. I hope it makes it.

One of the biggest surprises at the end of the 1960s came from the Galaxy magazines. In 1967 experiments went ahead with a periodical devoted to sf from different countries, and so in November INTERNATIONAL SF was born, edited by Pohl, and with twelve stories from such diverse countries as Germany, Australia, the USSR and Italy. A second issue appeared in June 1968, since when it has been dormant.

A similar fate befell WORLDS OF FANTASY, launched by the Galaxy group in September 1968, but with Lester Del Rey in charge. It was intended to cater for the growing group of fantasy fans that had come into being as a result of the mushroomed success in the USA of Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. Contents included a new Conan adventure and a report on Tolkien. There was a long delay before a second issue appeared, and since then the title has been in limbo.

In June 1968 GALAXY went monthly and IF (which had been monthly since July 1964) rose sharply in popularity with the result that it won the Hugo in 1966, 1967 and 1968. At this time the magazines were at the peak of their popularity. Then in 1969 they were sold to Universal Publishing Company and Frederik Pohl declined to transfer. Ejler Jakobssen, who had succeeded Pohl at SUPER SCIENCE STORIES a quarter-century earlier, was put in charge, and Lester Del Rey joined in.

The magazines changed radically. Production immediately looked slovenly and issues appeared erratically. Eventually they reverted to a bi-monthly schedule, and WORLDS OF TOMORROW made a guest reappearance in Autumn 1969 and then vanished. Jakobssen's new look took GALAXY followers initially by surprise, but lately a compromise has been reached. Now the magazines are far better packaged, and once again publish straightforward and enjoyable sf. Recently (April 1974) Jakobssen has resigned from Universal and has recommended that Pohl reassumes control. At the time of writing I am not aware of the outcome.

For a moment the late 1960s looked like a minirevival time. Magazines bearing the name VENTURE and SPACEWAY appeared on the stands. Sure enough, they were not imitations, but the old magazines back in the field. They did not last long.

F&SF resurrected VENTURE in May 1969 with Edward Ferman in charge. The format had not altered: a lead novel plus shorts. Only 128 pages cost 60 cents, and even though the fiction was good it only lasted six issues until August 1970.

SPACEWAY had been the successor to FANTASY BOOK published by William Crawford of California in 1954/5. January 1969 saw the first revived issue. It had a good cover but interior illustrations were still astonishingly bad and the majority of the content reprints from the old issues. Later issues improved but with its fourth in May 1970 the magazine died. (William Crawford is now publishing WITCHCRAFT & SORCERY, edited by Gerald Page. This magazine began life as COVEN 13 in September 1969, edited by Arthur Landis. Beautifully produced it only survived four issues until Crawford revived it. And on the subject of rebirths, October 1973 saw Sam Moskowitz's revival of WEIRD TALES).

With magazines dwindling and dying, no greater blow could have come than John Campbell's death of a heart-attack on Sunday, 11 July 1971. The last ANALOG to bear his name was the December 1971 edition. A total of 411 issues of that magazine had borne his trademark, a record for any editor, let alone in sf. An era really had ended. 1967 had seen the death of Hugo Gernsback, now Campbell, and shortly afterwards John Carnell and August Derleth would pass away. One felt the world was crumbling.

Who would succeed Campbell? Rumours had it Clifford Simak would assume control. But no, the January 1972 issue carried the name Ben Bova. Bova was 39, and was noted in the sf field not only for some good fiction but for many competent science articles. Bova's policy was certain to differ from Campbell's, and the letter column was full of opposing views. Nevertheless confirmation of the faith in Bova came with the 1973 Hugo awards, when he received the Hugo as Best Editor. (The magazine category had been abolished in 1972 when it had gone to F&SF).

And there it is. 1926 to 1974, nearly fifty years of science fiction magazines. They've had no easy ride, and more so now than ever the future is gloomy. Which way does the arrow point? Today everything seems to be in favour of the original anthology. Why? Because the bottom has fallen out of the enthusiasm for science fiction?

It seems a crime that today the sf magazine is still maligned and disrespected. All credit to John Campbell that he had kept ANALOG at its height, and its circulation (over 115,000) is still increasing. But even that is but half the circulation of ELLERY QUEEN'S MYSTERY MAGAZINE, and an infinitesimal part of the circulation of PLAYBOY or PENTHOUSE. Fair enough, there is no attempt to compete with those publications, but why should ELLERY QUEEN'S straight mystery magazine be a respected periodical whereas AMAZING STORIES merely attracts a sneer?

Unfortunately the answer rests in the public's ignorance of true science fiction. The dumb reporter who asked what had sf writers left to write about after Armstrong walked on the moon is typical of the public's attitude towards science fiction. And yet lunar adventure had been just *one* part of the sf genre over a century ago.

I am grateful to the editors of SCIENCE FICTION MONTHLY for giving me this opportunity to bring to light some of the big names of the science fiction magazine field and to show their importance and effect upon the genre. Where would Isaac Asimov or Robert Heinlein, Arthur Clarke or John Wyndham, Frank Herbert or even Christopher Priest have sold their first stories had it not been for sf magazines?

In April 1973 a new magazine appeared in the States, VERTEX. Large size, its 96 pages sells for $1.50, twice the price of GALAXY or IF. It is edited by Don Pfeil and has so far included new material by Robert Heinlein and Larry Niven, plus interviews with Heinlein, Silverberg, Anderson, Herbert and others. The first issue carried William Rotsler's *Patron of the Arts*, which was runner up for the Hugo Short Fiction Award. Is this magazine, so different to the digest ones, the shape of sf to come, or is it another shot in the dark?

And what of our own SCIENCE FICTION MONTHLY? Will it survive or follow the same road as all its predecessors? It's certainly different, and that is what sf needs. The answer lies with us the readers. Let us keep the sf magazines alive.

1. From PROLOGUE TO ANALOG, edited by John W Campbell, from the Panther paperback edition, 1967. Part of Campbell's 'Introduction, pages 11 and 12.

2. From NEW WORLDS for April 1964, published by Nova Publications Ltd, London. Part of Mike Moorcock's letter in the *Postmortem* letter department.

3. From ANALOG for March 1965, published by Condé Nast Publications Inc, Connecticut. Part of John Campbell's editorial *Time For America*, pages 7 and 94.

4. From NEW WORLDS 193, for August 1969, published by New Worlds Publishing, London. Part of Charles Platt's editorial *Lead-In*, page 1.

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